

Callahan's Chronicle

THE HISTORY
OF
PENDENNIS,

HIS FORTUNES AND MISFORTUNES,
HIS FRIENDS AND HIS GREATEST ENEMY.

BY
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IN THREE VOLUMES.
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P E N D E N N I S.

CHAPTER I.

New faces.

THE inmates of Fair Oaks were drowsily pursuing this humdrum existence, while the great house upon the hill, on the other side of the River Brawl, was shaking off the slumber in which it had lain during the lives of two generations of masters, and giving extraordinary signs of renewed liveliness.

Just about the time of Pen's little mishap, and when he was so absorbed in the grief occasioned by that calamity as to take no notice of events which befel persons less interesting to himself than Arthur Pendennis, an announcement appeared in the provincial journals which caused no small sensation in the county at least, and in all the towns, villages, halls and mansions, and parsonages for many miles round Clavering Park. At Clavering Market; at Cackleby Fair; at Chatteries Sessions; on Gooseberry Green, as the squire's carriage met the vicar's one-horse contrivance, and the inmates of both vehicles stopped on the road to talk; at Tinkleton Church gate, as the bell was tolling in the sunshine, and the white smocks and scarlet cloaks came trooping over the green common, to Sunday worship; in a hundred societies round about — the word was, that Clavering Park was to be inhabited again.

Some five years before, the county papers had advertised the marriage at Florence, at the British Legation, of Francis Clavering, Esq., only son of Sir Francis Clavering, Bart., of Clavering Park, with Jemima Augusta, daughter of Samuel Snell, of Calcutta, Esq., and widow of the late J. Amory, Esq. At that time the legend in the county was that Clavering, who had been ruined for many a year, had married a widow from India with some money. Some of the county folks caught a sight of the newly-married pair. The Kickleburys, travelling in Italy, had seen them. Clavering occupied the Poggi Palace at Florence, gave parties, and lived comfortably — but could never come to England. Another year — young Peregrine, of Cackleby, making a Long Vacation tour, had fallen in with the Claverings occupying Schloss Schinkenstein, on the Mummel See. At Rome, at Lucca, at Nice, at the baths and gambling places of the Rhine and Belgium, this worthy couple might occasionally be heard of by the curious, and rumours of them came, as it were by gusts, to Clavering's ancestral place.

Their last place of abode was Paris, where they appear to have lived in great fashion and splendour after the news of the death of Samuel Snell, Esq., of Calcutta, reached his orphan daughter in Europe.

Of Sir Francis Clavering's antecedents little can be said that would be advantageous to that respected baronet. The son of an outlaw, living in a dismal old chateau near Bruges, this gentleman had made a feeble attempt to start in life with a commission in a dragoon regiment, and had broken down almost at the outset. Transactions at the gambling-table had speedily effected his ruin; after a couple of years in the army he had been forced to sell out, had passed some time in Her Majesty's prison of the Fleet, and had then shipped over to Ostend to join the gouty exile, his father. And in Belgium,

France, and Germany, for some years, this decayed and abortive prodigal might be seen lurking about billiard-rooms and watering-places, punting at gambling-houses, dancing at boarding-house balls, and riding steeple-chases on other folks' horses.

It was at a boarding-house at Lausanne, that Francis Clavering made what he called the lucky *coup* of marrying the widow Amory, very lately returned from Calcutta. His father died soon after, by consequence of whose demise his wife became Lady Clavering. The title so delighted Mr. Snell of Calcutta, that he doubled his daughter's allowance; and, dying himself soon after, left a fortune to her and her children, the amount of which was, if not magnified by rumour, something very splendid indeed.

Before this time there had been, not rumours unfavourable to Lady Clavering's reputation, but unpleasant impressions regarding her ladyship. The best English people abroad were shy of making her acquaintance; her manners were not the most refined; her origin was lamentably low and doubtful. The retired East Indians, who are to be found in considerable force in most of the continental towns frequented by English, spoke with much scorn of the disreputable old lawyer and indigo-smuggler her father, and of Amory, her first husband, who had been mate of the Indiaman in which Miss Snell came out to join her father at Calcutta. Neither father nor daughter were in society at Calcutta, or had ever been heard of at Government House. Old Sir Jasper Rogers, who had been Chief Justice of Calcutta, had once said to his wife, that he could tell a queer story about Lady Clavering's first husband; but greatly to Lady Rogers's disappointment, and that of the young ladies his daughters, the old Judge could never be got to reveal that mystery.

They were all, however, glad enough to go to Lady Clavinger's parties, when her ladyship took the Hotel Bouilli in the Rue Grenelle at Paris, and blazed out in the polite world there in the winter of 183—. The Faubourg St. Germain took her up. Viscount Bagwig, our excellent ambassador, paid her marked attention. The princes of the family frequented her salons. The most rigid and noted of the English ladies resident in the French capital acknowledged and countenanced her; the virtuous Lady Elderbury, the severe Lady Rockminster, the venerable Countess of Southdown—people, in a word, renowned for austerity, and of quite a dazzling moral purity:—so great and beneficent an influence had the possession of ten (some said twenty) thousand a-year exercised upon Lady Clavinger's character and reputation. And her munificence and good-will were unbounded. Anybody (in society) who had a scheme of charity was sure to find her purse open. The French ladies of piety got money from her to support their schools and convents; she subscribed indifferently for the Armenian patriarch; for Father Barbarossa, who came to Europe to collect funds for his monastery on Mount Athos; for the Baptist Mission to Quashyboo, and the Orthodox Settlement in Feefawfoo, the largest and most savage of the Cannibal Islands. And it is on record of her, that, on the same day on which Madame de Cricri got five Napoleons from her in support of the poor persecuted Jesuits, who were at that time in very bad odour in France, Lady Budelight put her down in her subscription-list for the Rev. J. Ramshorn, who had had a vision which ordered him to convert the Pope of Rome. And more than this, and for the benefit of the worldly, her ladyship gave the best dinners, and the grandest balls and suppers, which were known at Paris during that season.

And it was during this time, that the good-natured lady must have arranged matters with her husband's creditors in

England, for Sir Francis re-appeared in his native country, without fear of arrest; was announced in the *Morning Post*, and the county paper, as having taken up his residence at Mivart's Hotel; and one day the anxious old housekeeper at Clavering House beheld a carriage and four horses drive up the long avenue, and stop before the moss-grown steps in front of the vast melancholy portico.

Three gentlemen were in the carriage — an open one. On the back seat was our old acquaintance, Mr. Tatham of Chatteries, whilst in the places of honour sat a handsome and portly gentleman enveloped in mustachios, whiskers, fur collars, and braiding, and by him a pale languid man, who descended feebly from the carriage, when the little lawyer, and the gentleman in fur, had nimbly jumped out of it.

They walked up the great moss-grown steps to the hall-door, and a foreign attendant, with ear-rings and a gold-laced cap, pulled strenuously at the great bell-handle at the cracked and sculptured gate. The bell was heard clanging loudly through the vast gloomy mansion. Steps resounded presently upon the marble pavement of the hall within; and the doors opened, and finally, Mrs. Blenkinsop, the housekeeper, Polly, her aid-de-camp, and Smart, the keeper, appeared bowing humbly.

Smart, the keeper, pulled the wisp of hay-coloured hair which adorned his sunburnt forehead, kicked out his left heel, as if there were a dog biting at his calves, and brought down his head to a bow. Old Mrs. Blenkinsop dropped a curtsy. Little Polly, her aid-de-camp, made a curtsy, and several rapid bows likewise; and Mrs. Blenkinsop, with a great deal of emotion, quavered out, "Welcome to Clavering, Sir Francis. It do my poor eyes good to see one of the family once more."

The speech and the greetings were all addressed to the grand gentleman in fur and braiding, who wore his hat so magnificently on one side, and twirled his mustachios so royally. But he burst out laughing, and said, "You've saddled the wrong horse, old lady — I'm not Sir Francis. Clavering what's come to revisit the halls of my ancestors. Friends and vassals! behold your rightful lord!"

And he pointed his hand towards the pale, languid gentleman, who said, "Don't be an ass, Ned."

"Yes, Mrs. Blenkinsop, I'm Sir Francis Clavering; I recollect you quite well. Forgot me, I suppose? — How dy do?" and he took the old lady's trembling hand; and nodded in her astonished face, in a not unkind manner.

Mrs. Blenkinsop declared upon her conscience that she would have known Sir Francis anywhere, that he was the very image of Sir Francis his father, and of Sir John who had gone before.

"O yes — thanky — of course — very much obliged — and that sort of thing," Sir Francis said, looking vacantly about the hall. "Dismal old place, ain't it, Ned? Never saw it but once, when my governor quarrelled with my gwandfather, in the year twenty-thwee."

"Dismal? — beautiful! — the Castle of Otranto! — the Mysteries of Udolpho, by Jove!" said the individual addressed as Ned. "What a fire-place! You might roast an elephant in it. Splendid carved gallery! Inigo Jones, by Jove! I'd lay five to two it's Inigo Jones."

"The upper part by Inigo Jones; the lower was altered by the eminent Dutch architect, Vanderputty, in George the First his time, by Sir Richard, fourth baronet," said the house-keeper.

"O indeed," said the Baronet. "'Gad, Ned, you know everything."

"I know a few things, Frank," Ned answered. "I know that's not a Snyders over the mantel-piece — bet you three to one it's a copy. We'll restore it, my boy. A lick of varnish, and it will come out wonderfully, Sir. That old fellow in the red gown, I suppose, is Sir Richard."

"Sheriff of the county, and sate in parliament in the reign of Queen Anne," said the housekeeper, wondering at the stranger's knowledge; "that on the right is Theodosia, wife of Harbottle, second baronet, by Lely, represented in the character of Venus, the Goddess of Beauty, — her son Gregory, the third baronet, by her side, as Cupid, God of Love, with a bow and arrows; that on the next panel is Sir Rupert, made a knight banneret by Charles the First, and whose property was confiscated by Oliver Cromwell."

"Thank you — needn't go on, Mrs. Blenkinsop," said the Baronet. "We'll walk about the place ourselves. Frosch, give me a cigar. Have a cigar, Mr. Tatham?"

Little Mr. Tatham tried a cigar which Sir Francis's courier handed to him, and over which the lawyer spluttered fearfully. "Needn't come with us, Mrs. Blenkinsop. What's-his-name — you — Smart — feed the horses and wash their mouths. Sha'n't stay long. Come along, Strong, — I know the way: I was here in twenty-three, at the end of my gwandfather's time." And Sir Francis and Captain Strong, for such was the style and title of Sir Francis's friend, passed out of the hall into the reception-rooms, leaving the discomfited Mrs. Blenkinsop to disappear by a side-door which led to her apartments, now the only habitable rooms in the long-uninhabited mansion.

It was a place so big that no tenant could afford to live in it; and Sir Francis and his friend walked through room after room, admiring their vastness and dreary and deserted grandeur. On the right of the hall door were the saloons and drawing-rooms, and on the other side the oak room, the par-

lour, the grand dining-room, the library, where Pen had found books in old days. Round three sides of the hall ran a gallery, by which, and corresponding passages, the chief bed-rooms were approached, and of which many were of stately proportions and exhibited marks of splendour. On the second story was a labyrinth of little uncomfortable garrets, destined for the attendants of the great folks who inhabited the mansion in the days when it was first built: and I do not know any more cheering mark of the increased philanthropy of our own times, than to contrast our domestic architecture with that of our ancestors, and to see how much better servants and poor are cared for now, than in times when my lord and my lady slept under gold canopies, and their servants lay above them not so airy or so clean as stables are now.

Up and down the house the two gentlemen wandered, the owner of the mansion being very silent and resigned about the pleasure of possessing it; whereas the Captain, his friend, examined the premises with so much interest and eagerness that you would have thought he was the master, and the other the indifferent spectator of the place. "I see capabilities in it — capabilities in it, Sir," cried the Captain. "Gad, Sir, leave it to me, and I'll make it the pride of the country, at a small expense. What a theatre we can have in the library here, the curtains between the columns which divide the room! What a famous room for a galop! — it will hold the whole shire. We'll hang the morning parlour with the tapestry in your second salon in the Rue de Grenelle, and furnish the oak room with the Moyen-age cabinets and the armour. Armour looks splendid against black oak, and there's a Venice glass in the Quai Voltaire, which will suit that high mantel-piece to an inch, Sir. The long saloon, white and crimson of course; the drawing-room yellow, satin; and the little drawing-room light blue, with lace over — hay?"

"I recollect my old governor caning me in that little room," Sir Francis said sententiously; "he always hated me, my old governor."

"Chintz is the dodge, I suppose, for my lady's rooms—the suite in the landing, to the south, the bed-room, the sitting-room, and the dressing-room. We'll throw a conservatory out, over the balcony. Where will you have your rooms?"

"Put mine in the north wing," said the Baronet, with a yawn, "and out of the reach of Miss Amory's confounded piano. I can't bear it. She's scweeching from morning till night."

The Captain burst out laughing. He settled the whole further arrangements of the house in the course of their walk through it; and, the promenade ended, they went into the steward's room, now inhabited by Mrs. Blenkinsop, and where Mr. Tatham was sitting poring over a plan of the estate, and the old housekeeper had prepared a collation in honour of her lord and master.

Then they inspected the kitchen and stables, about both of which Sir Francis was rather interested, and Captain Strong was for examining the gardens; but the Baronet said, "D—the gardens, and that sort of thing!" and finally he drove away from the house as unconcernedly as he had entered it; and that night the people of Clavering learned that Sir Francis Clavering had paid a visit to the Park, and was coming to live in the county.

When this fact came to be known at Chatteries, all the folks in the place were set in commotion: High Church and Low Church, half-pay captains and old maids and dowagers, sporting squireens of the vicinage, farmers, tradesmen, and factory people—all the population in and round about the little place. The news was brought to Fairoaks, and received by the ladies there, and by Mr. Pen, with some excitement. "Mrs. Pybus

says there is a very pretty girl in the family, Arthur," Laura said, who was as kind and thoughtful upon this point as women generally are: "a Miss Amory, Lady Clavering's daughter by her first marriage. Of course, you will fall in love with her as soon as she arrives."

Helen cried out, "Don't talk nonsense, Laura." Pen laughed, and said, "Well, there is the young Sir Francis for you."

"He is but four years old," Miss Laura replied. "But I shall console myself with that handsome officer, Sir Francis's friend. He was at church last Sunday, in the Clavering pew, and his mustachios were beautiful."

Indeed the number of Sir Francis's family (whereof the members have all been mentioned in the above paragraphs) was pretty soon known in his town, and everything else, as nearly as human industry and ingenuity could calculate, regarding his household. The Park avenue and grounds were dotted now with town folks of the summer evenings, who made their way up to the great house, peered about the premises, and criticised the improvements which were taking place there. Loads upon loads of furniture arrived in numberless vans from Chatteries and London; and numerous as the vans were, there was not one but Captain Glanders knew what it contained, and escorted the baggage up to the Park House.

He and Captain Edward Strong had formed an intimate acquaintance by this time. The younger Captain occupied those very lodgings at Clavering, which the peaceful Smirke had previously tenanted, and was deep in the good graces of Madame Fribsby, his landlady; and of the whole town, indeed. The Captain was splendid in person and raiment; fresh-coloured, blue-eyed, black-whiskered, broad-chested, athletic — a slight tendency to fulness did not take away from the comeliness of his jolly figure — a braver soldier

never presented a broader chest to the enemy. As he strode down Clavering High Street, his hat on one side, his cane clanking on the pavement, or waving round him in the execution of military cuts and soldatesque manœuvres — his jolly laughter ringing through the otherwise silent street — he was as welcome as sunshine to the place, and a comfort to every inhabitant in it.

On the first market-day he knew every pretty girl in the market: he joked with all the women; had a word with the farmers about their stock, and dined at the Agricultural Ordinary at the Clavering Arms, where he set them all dying with laughing by his fun and jokes. "Tu be sure he be a vine feller, tu be sure that he be," was the universal opinion of the gentlemen in top-boots. He shook hands with a score of them, as they rode out of the inn-yard on their old nags, waving his hat to them splendidly as he smoked his cigar in the inn-gate. In the course of the evening he was free of the landlady's bar, knew what rent the landlord paid, how many acres he farmed, how much malt he put in his strong beer; and whether he ever run in a little brandy unexcised by kings from Baymouth, or the fishing villages along the coast.

He had tried to live at the great house first; but it was so dull he couldn't stand it. "I am a creature born for society," he told Captain Glanders. "I'm down here to see Clavering's house set in order; for between ourselves, Frank has no energy, Sir, no energy; he's not the chest for it, Sir (and he threw out his own trunk as he spoke); but I must have social intercourse. Old Mrs. Blenkinsop goes to bed at seven, and takes Polly with her. There was nobody but me and the Ghost for the first two nights at the great house, and I own it, Sir, I like company. Most old soldiers do."

Glanders asked Strong where he had served? Captain Strong curled his mustache, and said with a laugh, that the other might almost ask where he had *not* served. "I began, Sir, as cadet of Hungarian Uhlans, and when the war of Greek independence broke out, quitted that service in consequence of a quarrel with my governor, and was one of seven who escaped from Missolonghi, and was blown up in one of Botzaris's fireships, at the age of seventeen. I'll show you my Cross of the Redeemer, if you'll come over to my lodgings and take a glass of grog with me, Captain, this evening. I've a few of those baubles in my desk. I've the White Eagle of Poland; Skrzynecki gave it me" (he pronounced Skrzynecki's name with wonderful accuracy and gusto) "upon the field of Ostrolenka. I was a lieutenant of the fourth regiment, Sir, and we marched through Diebitsch's lines — bang thro' em into Prussia, Sir, without firing a shot. Ah, Captain, that was a mismanaged business. I received this wound by the side of the King before Oporto, — where he would have pounded the stock-jobbing Pedroitses, had Bourmont followed my advice; and I served in Spain with the King's troops, until the death of my dear friend, Zumalacarreguy, when I saw the game was over, and hung up my toasting iron, Captain. Alava offered me a regiment, the Queen's Muleteros; but I couldn't — damme, I couldn't — and now, Sir, you know Ned Strong — the Chevalier Strong they call me abroad — as well as he knows himself."

In this way almost everybody in Clavering came to know Ned Strong. He told Madame Fribsby, he told the landlord of the George, he told Baker at the reading-rooms, he told Mrs. Glanders, and the young ones, at dinner: and, finally, he told Mr. Arthur Pendennis, who, yawning into Clavering one day, found the Chevalier Strong in company with Cap-

tain Glanders; and who was delighted with his new acquaintance.

Before many days were over, Captain Strong was as much at home in Helen's drawing-room as he was in Madame Fribsby's first floor; and made the lonely house very gay with his good humour and ceaseless flow of talk. The two women had never before seen such a man. He had a thousand stories about battles and dangers to interest them — about Greek captives, Polish beauties, and Spanish nuns. He could sing scores of songs, in half-a-dozen languages, and would sit down to the piano and troll them off in a rich manly voice. Both the ladies pronounced him to be delightful — and so he was; though, indeed, they had not had much choice of man's society as yet, having seen in the course of their lives but few persons, except old Portman and the Major, and Mr. Pen, who was a genius, to be sure; but then your geniuses are somewhat flat and moody at home.

And Captain Strong acquainted his new friends at Fairoaks, not only with his own biography, but with the whole history of the family now coming to Clavering. It was he who had made the marriage between his friend Frank and the widow Amory. She wanted rank, and he wanted money. What match could be more suitable? He organised it; he made those two people happy. There was no particular romantic attachment between them; the widow was not of an age or a person for romance, and Sir Francis, if he had his game at billiards, and his dinner, cared for little besides. But they were as happy as people could be. Clavering would return to his native place and country, his wife's fortune would pay his encumbrances off, and his son and heir would be one of the first men in the county.

"And Miss Amory?" Laura asked. Laura was uncommonly curious about Miss Amory.

Strong laughed. "Oh, Miss Amory is a muse — Miss Amory is a mystery — Miss Amory is a *femme incomprise*." "What is that?" asked simple Mrs. Pendennis — but the Chevalier gave her no answer; perhaps could not give her one. "Miss Amory paints, Miss Amory writes poems, Miss Amory composes music, Miss Amory rides like Diana Vernon. Miss Amory is a paragon, in a word."

"I hate clever women," said Pen.

"Thank you," said Laura. For her part she was sure she should be charmed with Miss Amory, and quite longed to have such a friend. And with this she looked Pen full in the face, as if every word the little hypocrite said was Gospel truth.

Thus, an intimacy was arranged and prepared beforehand between the Fair Oaks family and their wealthy neighbours at the Park; and Pen and Laura were to the full as eager for their arrivals, as even the most curious of the Clavering folks. A Londoner, who sees fresh faces and yawns at them every day, may smile at the eagerness with which country people expect a visitor. A cockney comes amongst them, and is remembered by his rural entertainers for years after he has left them, and forgotten them very likely — floated far away from them on the vast London sea. But the islanders remember long after the mariner has sailed away, and can tell you what he said and what he wore, and how he looked and how he laughed. In fine, a new arrival is an event in the country not to be understood by us, who don't, and had rather not, know who lives next door.

When the painters and upholsterers had done their work in the house, and so beautified it, under Captain Strong's

superintendence, that he might well be proud of his taste, that gentleman announced that he should go to London, where the whole family had arrived by this time, and should speedily return to establish them in their renovated mansion.

Detachments of domestics preceded them. Carriages came down by sea, and were brought over from Baymouth by horses which had previously arrived under the care of grooms and coachmen. One day the "Alacrity" coach brought down on its roof two large and melancholy men, who were dropped at the Park lodge with their trunks, and who were Messieurs Frederic and James, metropolitan footmen, who had no objection to the country, and brought with them state and other suits of the Clavering uniform.

On another day, the mail deposited at the gate a foreign gentleman, adorned with many ringlets and chains. He made a great riot at the lodge gate to the keeper's wife (who, being a West country woman, did not understand his English or his Gascon French), because there was no carriage in waiting to drive him to the house, a mile off, and because he could not walk entire leagues in his fatigued state and varnished boots. This was Monsieur Alcide Mirobolant, formerly Chef of his Highness the Duc de Borodino, of H. Eminence Cardinal Beccafico, and at present Chef of the bouche of Sir Clavering, Baronet:—Monsieur Mirobolant's library, pictures, and piano, had arrived previously in charge of the intelligent young Englishman, his aid-de-camp. He was, moreover, aided by a professed female cook, likewise from London, who had inferior females under her orders.

He did not dine in the steward's room, but took his nutriment in solitude in his own apartments, where a female servant was affected to his private use. It was a grand sight

to behold him in his dressing-gown composing a *menu*. He always sate down and played the piano for some time before that. If interrupted, he remonstrated pathetically with his little maid. Every great artist, he said, had need of solitude to perfectionate his works.

But we are advancing matters in the fulness of our love and respect for Monsieur Mirobolant, and bringing him prematurely on the stage.

The Chevalier Strong had a hand in the engagement of all the London domestics, and, indeed, seemed to be the master of the house. There were those among them who said he was the house-steward, only he dined with the family. Howbeit, he knew how to make himself respected, and two of by no means the least comfortable rooms of the house were assigned to his particular use.

He was walking upon the terrace finally upon the eventful day, when, amidst an immense jangling of bells from Clavering Church, where the flag was flying, an open carriage and one of those travelling chariots or family arks, which only English philo-progenitiveness could invent, drove rapidly with foaming horses through the Park gates, and up to the steps of the Hall. The two *battans* of the sculptured door flew open. Two superior officers in black, the large and melancholy gentlemen, now in livery with their hair in powder, the country menials engaged to aid them, were in waiting in the hall, and bowed like tall elms when autumn winds wail in the park. Through this avenue passed Sir Francis Clavering with a most unmoved face: Lady Clavering, with a pair of bright black eyes, and a good-humoured countenance, which wagged and nodded very graciously: Master Francis Clavering, who was holding his Mamma's skirt (and who stopped the procession to look at the largest footman, whose appearance seemed to strike the young gentleman), and Miss

Blandy, governess to Master Francis, and Miss Amory, her ladyship's daughter, giving her arm to Captain Strong. It was summer, but fires of welcome were crackling in the great hall chimney, and in the rooms which the family were to occupy.

Monsieur Mirobolant had looked at the procession from one of the lime-trees in the avenue. "Elle est là," he said, laying his jewelled hand on his richly-embroidered velvet waistcoat with glass buttons, "Je t'ai vue, je te bénis, O ma sylphide, O mon ange!" and he dived into the thicket, and made his way back to his furnaces and saucepans.

The next Sunday the same party which had just made its appearance at Clavering Park, came and publicly took possession of the ancient pew in the church, where so many of the Baronet's ancestors had prayed, and were now kneeling in effigy. There was such a run to see the new folks, that the Low Church was deserted, to the disgust of its pastor; and as the state barouche, with the grays and coachman in silver wig, and solemn footmen, drew up at the old church-yard gate, there was such a crowd assembled there as had not been seen for many a long day. Captain Strong knew everybody, and saluted for all the company — the country people vowed my lady was not handsome, to be sure, but pronounced her to be uncommon fine dressed, as indeed she was — with the finest of shawls, the finest of pelisses, the brilliantest of bonnets and wreaths, and a power of rings, cameos, brooches, chains, bangles, and other nameless gimeracks; and ribbons of every breadth and colour of the rainbow flaming on her person. Miss Amory appeared meek in dove-colour, like a vestal virgin — while Master Francis was in the costume then prevalent of Rob Roy Macgregor, a celebrated Highland outlaw. The Baronet was not more animated than ordinarily — there was a happy vacuity about him which enabled him to

face a dinner, a death, a church, a marriage, with the same indifferent ease.

A pew for the Clavering servants was filled by these domestics, and the enraptured congregation saw the gentlemen from London with "vlower on their heeds," and the miraculous coachman with his silver wig, take their places in that pew so soon as his horses were put up at the Clavering Arms.

In the course of the service, Master Francis began to make such a yelling in the pew, that Frederic, the tallest of the footmen, was beckoned by his master, and rose and went and carried out Master Francis, who roared and beat him on the head, so that the powder flew round about, like clouds of incense. Nor was he pacified until placed on the box of the carriage, where he played at horses with John's whip.

"You see the little beggar's never been to church before, Miss Bell," the Baronet drawled out to a young lady who was visiting him; "no wonder he should make a row: I don't go in town neither, but I think it's right in the country to give a good example — and that sort of thing."

Miss Bell laughed and said, "The little boy had not given a particularly good example."

"Gad, I don't know, and that sort of thing," said the Baronet. "It ain't so bad neither. Whenever he wants a thing, Frank always cwies, and whenever he cwies he gets it."

Here the child in question began to howl for a dish of sweetmeats on the luncheon table, and making a lunge across the table-cloth, upset a glass of wine over the best waistcoat of one of the guests present, Mr. Arthur Pendennis, who was greatly annoyed at being made to look foolish, and at having his spotless cambric shirt front blotched with wine.

"We do spoil him so," said Lady Clavering to Mrs. Pendennis, fondly gazing at the cherub, whose hands and face

were now frothed over with the species of lather which is inserted in the confection called *meringues à la crème*.

"It is very wrong," said Mrs. Pendennis, as if she had never done such a thing herself as spoil a child.

"Mamma says she spoils my brother, — do you think anything could, Miss Bell? Look at him, — isn't he like a little angel?"

"Gad I was quite wight," said the Baronet. "He has cwied, and he has got it, you see. Go it, Fwank, old boy."

"Sir Francis is a very judicious parent," Miss Amory whispered. "Don't you think so, Miss Bell? I sha'n't call you Miss Bell — I shall call you Laura. I admired you so at church. Your robe was not well made, nor your bonnet very fresh. But you have such beautiful gray eyes, and such a lovely tint."

"Thank you," said Miss Bell, laughing.

"Your cousin is handsome, and thinks so. He is uneasy *de sa personne*. He has not seen the world yet. Has he genius? Has he suffered? A lady, a little woman in a ruffled satin and velvet shoes — a Miss Pybus — came here, and said he has suffered. I, too, have suffered, — and you, Laura, has your heart ever been touched?"

Laura said "No!" but perhaps blushed a little at the idea or the question, so that the other said, —

"Ah, Laura! I see it all. It is the beau cousin. Tell me everything. I already love you as a sister."

"You are very kind," said Miss Bell, smiling, "and — and it must be owned that it is a very sudden attachment."

"All attachments are so. It is electricity — spontaneity. It is instantaneous. I knew I should love you from the moment I saw you. Do you not feel it yourself?"

"Not yet," said Laura; "but — I dare say I shall if I try."

"Call me by my name, then."

"But I don't know it," Laura cried out.

"My name is Blanche — isn't it a pretty name? Call me by it."

"Blanche — it is very pretty, indeed."

"And while mamma talks with that kind-looking lady — what relation is she to you? She must have been pretty once, but is rather *passée*; she is not well *gantie*, but she has a pretty hand — and while mamma talks to her, come with me to my own room, — my own, own room. It's a darling room, though that horrid creature, Captain Strong, did arrange it. Are you *éprise* of him? He says you are, but I know better; it is the beau cousin. Yes — *il a de beaux yeux. Je n'aime pas les blonds, ordinairement. Car je suis blonde moi — je suis Blanche et blonde,*" — and she looked at her face and made a *moue* in the glass; and never stopped for Laura's answer to the questions which she had put.

Blanche was fair, and like a sylph. She had fair hair, with green reflections in it. But she had dark eyebrows. She had long black eye-lashes, which veiled beautiful brown eyes. She had such a slim waist, that it was a wonder to behold; and such slim little feet, that you would have thought the grass would hardly bend under them. Her lips were of the colour of faint rosebuds, and her voice warbled limpidly over a set of the sweetest little pearly teeth ever seen. She showed them very often, for they were very pretty. She was very good-natured, and a smile not only showed her teeth wonderfully, but likewise exhibited two lovely little pink dimples, that nestled in either cheek.

She showed Laura her drawings, which the other thought charming. She played her some of her waltzes, with a rapid

and brilliant finger, and Laura was still more charmed. And she then read her some poems, in French and English, likewise of her own composition, and which she kept locked in her own book — her own dear little book; it was bound in blue velvet, with a gilt lock, and on it was printed in gold the title of "Mes Larmes."

"Mes Larmes! — isn't it a pretty name?" the young lady continued, who was pleased with everything that she did, and did everything very well. Laura owned that it was. She had never seen anything like it before; anything so lovely, so accomplished, so fragile and pretty; warbling so prettily, and tripping about such a pretty room, with such a number of pretty books, pictures, flowers, round about her. The honest and generous country girl forgot even jealousy in her admiration. "Indeed, Blanche," she said, "everything in the room is pretty; and you are the prettiest of all." The other smiled, looked in the glass, went up and took both of Laura's hands, and kissed them, and sat down to the piano, and shook out a little song, as if she had been a nightingale.

This was the first visit paid by Fair Oaks to Clavering Park, in return for Clavering Park's visit to Fair Oaks, in reply to Fair Oaks's cards left a few days after the arrival of Sir Francis's family. The intimacy between the young ladies sprang up like Jack's Bean-stalk to the skies in a single night. The large footmen were perpetually walking with little rose-coloured pink-notes to Fair Oaks; where there was a pretty housemaid in the kitchen, who might possibly tempt those gentlemen to so humble a place. Miss Amory sent music, or Miss Amory sent a new novel, or a picture from the "Journal des Modes," to Laura; or my lady's compliments arrived with flowers and fruit; or Miss Amory begged and prayed Miss Bell to come to dinner; and dear Mrs. Pendennis, if she was strong enough; and Mr. Arthur, if a humdrum party were not too

stupid for him: and would send a pony-carriage for Mrs. Pendennis; and would take no denial.

Neither Arthur nor Laura wished to refuse. And Helen, who was, indeed, somewhat ailing, was glad that the two should have their pleasure; and would look at them fondly as they set forth, and ask in her heart that she might not be called away until those two beings whom she loved best in the world should be joined together. As they went out and crossed over the bridge, she remembered summer evenings five-and-twenty years ago, when she, too, had bloomed in her brief prime of love and happiness. It was all over now. The moon was looking from the purpling sky, and the stars glittering there, just as they used in the early, well-remembered evenings. He was lying dead far away, with the billows rolling between them. Good God! how well she remembered the last look of his face as they parted. It looked out at her through the vista of long years, as sad and as clear as then.

So Mr. Pen and Miss Laura found the society at Clavering Park an uncommonly agreeable resort of summer evenings. Blanche vowed that she *raffoled* of Laura; and, very likely, Mr. Pen was pleased with Blanche. His spirits came back: he laughed and rattled till Laura wondered to hear him. It was not the same Pen, yawning, in a shooting-jacket, in the Fair Oaks parlour, who appeared alert and brisk, and smiling and well dressed, in Lady Clavering's drawing-room. Sometimes they had music. Laura had a sweet contralto voice, and sang with Blanche, who had had the best continental instruction, and was charmed to be her friend's mistress. Sometimes Mr. Pen joined in these concerts, or oftener looked sweet upon Miss Blanche as she sang. Sometimes they had gleees, when Captain Strong's chest was of vast service, and he boomed out in a prodigious bass, of which he was not a little proud.

"Good fellow, Strong — ain't he, Miss Bell?" Sir Francis would say to her. "Plays at *écarté* with Lady Clavering — plays anything, pitch and toss, pianoforte, cwibbage if you like. How long do you think he's been staying with me? He came for a week with a carpet-bag, and Gad, he's been staying here thwee years. Good fellow, ain't he? Don't know how he gets a shillin' though, begad I don't, Miss Lawra."

And yet the Chevalier, if he lost his money to Lady Clavering, always paid it; and if he lived with his friend for three years, paid for that too — in good humour, in kindness and joviality, in a thousand little services by which he made himself agreeable. What gentleman could want a better friend than a man who was always in spirits, never in the way or out of it, and was ready to execute any commission for his patron, whether it was to sing a song or meet a lawyer, to fight a duel or to carve a capon?

Although Laura and Pen commonly went to Clavering Park together, yet sometimes Mr. Pen took walks there unattended by her, and about which he did not tell her. He took to fishing the Brawl which runs through the Park, and passes not very far from the garden-wall, and by the oddest coincidence, Miss Amory would walk out (having been to look at her flowers), and would be quite surprised to see Mr. Pendennis fishing.

I wonder what trout Pen caught while the young lady was looking on? or whether Miss Blanche was the pretty little fish which played round his fly, and which Mr. Pen was endeavouring to hook? It must be owned, he became very fond of that healthful and invigorating pursuit of angling, and was whipping the Brawl continually with his fly.

As for Miss Blanche, she had a kind heart; and having, as she owned, herself "suffered" a good deal in the course of her brief life and experience — why, she could compassionate other susceptible beings like Pen, who had suffered too. Her

love for Laura and that dear Mrs. Pendennis redoubled: if they were not at the Park, she was not easy unless she herself was at Fair Oaks. She played with Laura; she read French and German with Laura; and Mr. Pen read French and German along with them. He turned sentimental ballads of Schiller and Göthe into English verse for the ladies, and Blanche unlocked "Mes Larmes" for him, and imparted to him some of the plaintive outpourings of her own tender Muse.

It appeared from these poems that this young creature had indeed suffered prodigiously. She was familiar with the idea of suicide. Death she repeatedly longed for. A faded rose inspired her with such grief that you would have thought she must die in pain of it. It was a wonder how a young creature (who had had a snug home, or been at a comfortable boarding-school, and had no outward grief or hardship to complain of) should have suffered so much — should have found the means of getting at such an ocean of despair and passion (as a runaway-boy who *will* get to sea), and having embarked on it, should survive it. What a talent she must have had for weeping to be able to pour out so many of Mes Larmes!

They were not particularly briny, Miss Blanche's tears, that is the truth; but Pen, who read her verses, thought them very well for a lady — and wrote some verses himself for her. His were very violent and passionate, very hot, sweet and strong: and he not only wrote verses; but — O, the villain! O, the deceiver! he altered and adapted former poems in his possession, and which had been composed for a certain Miss Emily Fotheringay, for the use and to the Christian name of Miss Blanche Amory.

CHAPTER II.

A little innocent.

EVERY house has its skeleton in it somewhere, and it may be a comfort to some unhappy folks to think that the luckiest and most wealthy of their neighbours have their miseries and causes of disquiet. Our little innocent Muse of a Blanche, who sang so nicely and talked so sweetly, you would have thought she must have made sunshine wherever she went, was the skeleton, or the misery, or the bore, or the Nemesis of Clavering House, and of most of the inhabitants thereof. As one little stone in your own shoe or your horse's, suffices to put either to torture and to make your journey miserable, so in life a little obstacle is sufficient to obstruct your entire progress, and subject you to endless annoyance and disquiet. Who would have guessed that such a smiling little fairy as Blanche Amory could be the cause of discord in any family?

"I say, Strong," one day the Baronet said, as the pair were conversing after dinner over the billiard-table, and that great unbosomer of secrets, a cigar; "I say, Strong, I wish to the doose your wife was dead."

"So do I. That's a cannon, by Jove. But she won't, she'll live for ever — you see if she don't. Why do you wish her off the hooks, Frank, my boy?" asked Captain Strong.

"Because then you might marry Missy. She ain't bad-looking. She'll have ten thousand, and that's a good bit of money for such a poor old devil as you," drawled out the other gentleman. "And gad, Strong, I hate her worse and worse every day. I can't stand her, Strong, by gad, I can't."

"I wouldn't take her at twice the figure," Captain Strong said, laughing. "I never saw such a little devil in my life."

"I should like to poison her," said the sententious Baronet; "by Jove I should."

"Why, what has she been at now?" asked his friend.

"Nothing particular," answered Sir Francis; "only her old tricks. That girl has such a knack of making everybody miserable that, hang me, it's quite surprising. Last night she sent the governess crying away from the dinner-table. Afterwards, as I was passing Frank's room, I heard the poor little beggar howling in the dark, and found his sister had been frightening his soul out of his body, by telling him stories about the ghost that's in the house. At lunch she gave my lady a turn; and though my wife's a fool, she's a good soul — I'm hanged if she ain't."

"What did Missy do to her?" Strong asked.

"Why, hang me, if she didn't begin talking about the late Amory, my predecessor," the Baronet said, with a grin. "She got some picture out of the Keepsake, and said she was sure it was like her dear father. She wanted to know where her father's grave was. Hang her father! Whenever Miss Amory talks about him, Lady Clavering always bursts out crying; and the little devil will talk about him in order to spite her mother. To-day when she began, I got in a confounded rage, said I was her father, and — and that sort of thing, and then, Sir, she took a shy at me."

"And what did she say about you, Frank?" Mr. Strong still laughing, inquired of his friend and patron.

"Gad, she said I wasn't her father; that I wasn't fit to comprehend her; that her father must have been a man of genius and fine feelings, and that sort of thing: whereas I had married her mother for money."

"Well, didn't you?" asked Strong.

"It don't make it any the pleasanter to hear because it's true, don't you know," Sir Francis Clavering answered. "I

ain't a literary man and that; but I ain't such a fool as she makes me out. I don't know how it is, but she always manages to — to put me in the hole, don't you understand. She turns all the house round her in her quiet way, and with her confounded sentimental airs. I wish she was dead, Ned."

"It was my wife whom you wanted dead just now," Strong said, always in perfect good humour; upon which the Baronet, with his accustomed candour, said, "Well, when people bore my life out, I *do* wish they were dead, and I wish Missy were down a well, with all my heart."

Thus it will be seen from the above report of this candid conversation that our accomplished little friend had some peculiarities or defects of character which rendered her not very popular. She was a young lady of some genius, exquisite sympathies and considerable literary attainments, living, like many another genius, with relatives who could not comprehend her. Neither her mother nor her step-father were persons of a literary turn. Bell's Life and the Racing Calendar were the extent of the Baronet's reading, and Lady Clavering still wrote like a school-girl of thirteen, and with an extraordinary disregard to grammar and spelling. And as Miss Amory felt very keenly that she was not appreciated, and that she lived with persons who were not her equals in intellect or conversational power, she lost no opportunity to acquaint her family circle with their inferiority to herself, and not only was a martyr, but took care to let everybody know that she was so. If she suffered, as she said and thought she did, severely, are we to wonder that a young creature of such delicate sensibilities should shriek and cry out a good deal? Without sympathy life is nothing; and would it not have been a want of candour on her part to affect a cheerfulness which she did not feel, or pretend a respect for those towards whom it was quite impossible she should entertain any reverence? If a poetess may not be-

moan her lot, of what earthly use is her lyre? Blanche struck hers only to the saddest of tunes; and sang elegies over her dead hopes, dirges over her early frost-nipt buds of affection, as became such a melancholy fate and Muse.

Her actual distresses, as we have said, had not been up to the present time very considerable: but her griefs lay, like those of most of us, in her own soul — that being sad and habitually dissatisfied, what wonder that she should weep? So Mes Larmes dribbled out of her eyes any day at command: she could furnish an unlimited supply of tears, and her faculty of shedding them increased by practice. For sentiment is like another complaint mentioned by Horace, as increasing by self-indulgence (I am sorry to say, ladies, that the complaint in question is called the dropsy), and the more you cry, the more you will be able and desirous to do so.

Missy had begun to gush at a very early age. Lamartine was her favourite bard from the period when she first could feel: and she had subsequently improved her mind by a sedulous study of novels of the great modern authors of the French language. There was not a romance of Balzac and George Sand which the indefatigable little creature had not devoured by the time she was sixteen: and, however little she sympathised with her relatives at home, she had friends, as she said, in the spirit-world, meaning the tender Indiana, the passionate and poetic Lelia, the amiable Trenmor, that high-souled convict, that angel of the galleys, — the fiery Stenio, — and the other numberless heroes of the French romances. She had been in love with Prince Rodolph and Prince Djama while she was yet at school, and had settled the divorce question, and the rights of woman, with Indiana, before she had left off pinafores. The impetuous little lady played at love with these imaginary worthies, as a little while before she had played at maternity with her doll. Pretty little poetical

spirits! it is curious to watch them with those playthings. To-day the blue-eyed one is the favourite, and the black-eyed one is pushed behind the drawers. To-morrow blue-eyes may take its turn of neglect: and it may be an odious little wretch with a burnt nose, or torn head of hair, and no eyes at all, that takes the first place in Miss's affection, and is dandled and caressed in her arms.

As novelists are supposed to know everything, even the secrets of female hearts, which the owners themselves do not perhaps know, we may state that at eleven years of age Mademoiselle Betsi, as Miss Amory was then called, had felt tender emotions towards a young Savoyard organ-grinder at Paris, whom she persisted in believing to be a prince carried off from his parents; that at twelve an old and hideous drawing-master — (but, ah, what age or personal defects are proof against woman's love?) had agitated her young heart; and that, at thirteen, being at Madame de Caramel's boarding-school, in the Champs Elysées, which, as everybody knows, is next door to Monsieur Rogron's (Chevalier of the Legion of Honour) pension for young gentlemen, a correspondence by letter took place between the *séduisante* Miss Betsi and two young gentlemen of the College of Charlemagne, who were pensioners of the Chevalier Rogron.

In the above paragraph our young friend has been called by a Christian name, different to that under which we were lately presented to her. The fact is, that Miss Amory, called Missy at home, had really at the first been christened Betsy — but assumed the name of Blanche of her own will and fantasy, and crowned herself with it; and the weapon which the Baronet, her step-father, held in terror over her, was the threat to call her publicly by her name of Betsy, by which menace he sometimes managed to keep the young rebel in order.

We have spoken just now of children's dolls, and of the manner in which those little people take up and neglect their darling toys, and very likely this history will show that Miss Blanche assumed and put away her live dolls with a similar girlish inconstancy. She had had hosts of dear, dear, darling, friends ere now, and had quite a little museum of locks of hair in her treasure-chest, which she had gathered in the course of her sentimental progress. Some dear friends had married: some had gone to other schools: one beloved sister she had lost from the pension, and found again, O, horror! her darling, her Léocadie, keeping the books in her father's shop, a grocer in the Rue du Bac: in fact, she had met with a number of disappointments, estrangements, disillusionments, as she called them in her pretty French jargon, and had seen and suffered a great deal for so young a woman. But it is the lot of sensibility to suffer, and of confiding tenderness to be deceived, and she felt that she was only undergoing the penalties of genius in these pangs and disappointments of her young career.

Meanwhile, she managed to make the honest lady, her mother, as uncomfortable as circumstances would permit; and caused her worthy step-father to wish she was dead. With the exception of Captain Strong, whose invincible good humour was proof against her sarcasms, the little lady ruled the whole house with her tongue. If Lady Clavering talked about Sparrowgrass instead of Asparagus, or called an object a hobject, as this unfortunate lady would sometimes do, Missy calmly corrected her, and frightened the good soul, her mother, into errors only the more frequent as she grew more nervous under her daughter's eye.

It is not to be supposed, considering the vast interest which the arrival of the family at Clavering Park inspired in the

inhabitants of the little town, that Madame Fribsby alone, of all the folks in Clavering, should have remained unmoved and incurious. At the first appearance of the Park family in church, Madame noted every article of toilette which the ladies wore, from their bonnets to their brodequins, and took a survey of the attire of the ladies' maids in the pew allotted to them. We fear that Doctor Portman's sermon, though it was one of his oldest and most valued compositions, had little effect upon Madame Fribsby on that day. In a very few days afterwards, she had managed for herself an interview with Lady Clavering's confidential attendant in the housekeeper's room at the Park; and her cards in French and English, stating that she received the newest fashions from Paris from her correspondent Madame Victorine, and that she was in the custom of making court and ball dresses for the nobility and gentry of the shire, were in the possession of Lady Clavering and Miss Amory, and favourably received, as she was happy to hear, by those ladies.

Mrs. Bonner, Lady Clavering's lady, became soon a great frequenter of Madame Fribsby's drawing-room, and partook of many entertainments at the milliner's expense. A meal of green tea, scandal, hot Sally-Lunn cakes, and a little novel reading, were always at the service of Mrs. Bonner, whenever she was free to pass an evening in the town. And she found much more time for these pleasures than her junior officer, Miss Amory's maid, who seldom could be spared for a holiday, and was worked as hard as any factory girl by that inexorable little Muse, her mistress.

The Muse loved to be dressed becomingly, and, having a lively fancy and a poetic desire for change, was for altering her attire every day. Her maid having a taste in dress-making — to which art she had been an apprentice at Paris, before she entered into Miss Blanche's service there — was kept from

morning till night altering and remodelling Miss Amory's habiliments; and rose very early and went to bed very late, in obedience to the untiring caprices of her little task-mistress. The girl was of respectable English parents. There are many of our people, colonists of Paris, who have seen better days, who are not quite ruined, who do not quite live upon charity, and yet cannot get on without it; and as her father was a cripple incapable of work, and her return home would only increase the burthen and add to the misery of the family, poor Pincott was fain to stay where she could maintain herself, and spare a little relief to her parents.

Our Muse, with the candour which distinguished her, never failed to remind her attendant of the real state of matters. "I should send you away, Pincott, for you are a great deal too weak, and your eyes are failing you, and you are always crying and snivelling and wanting the doctor; but I wish that your parents at home should be supported, and I go on enduring you for their sake, mind," the dear *Blanche* would say to her timid little attendant. Or, "*Pincott*, your wretched appearance and slavish manner, and red eyes, positively give me the migraine; and I think I shall make you wear rouge, so that you may look a little cheerful;" or, "*Pincott*, I can't bear, even for the sake of your starving parents, that you should tear my hair out of my head in that manner; and I will thank you to write to them and say that I dispense with your services." After which sort of speeches, and after keeping her for an hour trembling over her hair, which the young lady loved to have combed, as she perused one of her favourite French novels, she would go to bed at one o'clock, and say, "*Pincott*, you may kiss me. Good night. I should like you to have the pink dress ready for the morning." And so with a blessing upon her attendant, she would turn round and go to sleep.

The Muse might lie in bed as long as she chose of a morning, and availed herself of that privilege; but Pincott had to rise very early indeed to get her mistress's task done; and had to appear next day with the same red eyes and the same wan face, which displeased Miss Amory by their want of gaiety, and caused the mistress to be so angry, because the servant persisted in being and looking unwell and unhappy. Not that Blanche ever thought she was a hard mistress. Indeed, she made quite a friend of Pincott, at times, and wrote some very pretty verses about the lonely little tiring-maid, whose heart was far away. Our beloved Blanche was a superior being, and expected to be waited upon as such. And I do not know whether there are any other ladies in this world who treat their servants or dependents so, but it may be that there are such, and that the tyranny which they exercise over their subordinates, and the pangs which they can manage to inflict with a soft voice, and a well-bred simper, are as cruel as those which a slave-driver administers with an oath and a whip.

But Blanche was a Muse — a delicate little creature, quite tremulous with excitability, whose eyes filled with tears at the smallest emotion; and who knows, but that it was the very fineness of her feelings which caused them to be *froisséd* so easily? You crush a butterfly by merely touching it. Vulgar people have no idea of the sensibility of a Muse.

So little Pincott being occupied all day and night in stitching, hemming, ripping, combing, ironing, crimping, for her mistress; in reading to her when in bed, — for the girl was mistress of the two languages, and had a sweet voice and manner — could take no share in Madame Fribsby's soirées, nor indeed was she much missed, or considered of sufficient consequence to appear at their entertainments.

But there was another person connected with the Clavering establishment, who became a constant guest of our friend, the milliner. This was the chief of the kitchen, Monsieur Mirobolant, with whom Madame Fribsby soon formed an intimacy.

Not having been accustomed to the appearance or society of persons of the French nation, the rustic inhabitants of Clavering were not so favourably impressed by Monsieur Alcide's manners and appearance, as that gentleman might have desired that they should be. He walked among them quite unsuspectingly upon the afternoon of a summer day, when his services were not required at the House, in his usual favourite costume, namely, his light green frock or paletot, his crimson velvet waistcoat, with blue glass buttons, his pantalon Écossais, of a very large and decided check pattern, his orange satin neckcloth, and his jean-boots, with tips of shiny leather, — these, with a gold embroidered cap, and a richly-gilt cane, or other varieties of ornament of a similar tendency, formed his usual holiday costume, in which he flattered himself there was nothing remarkable (unless, indeed, the beauty of his person should attract observation), and in which he considered that he exhibited the appearance of a gentleman of good Parisian ton.

He walked then down the street, grinning and ogling every woman he met with glances, which he meant should kill them outright, and peered over the railings, and in at the windows, where females were, in the tranquil summer evening. But Betsy, Mrs. Pybus's maid, shrank back with a Lor bless us, as Alcide ogled her over the laurel bush; the Miss Bakers, and their mamma, stared with wonder; and presently a crowd began to follow the interesting foreigner, of ragged urchins and children, who left their dirt-pies in the street to pursue him.

For some time he thought that admiration was the cause which led these persons in his wake, and walked on, pleased himself that he could so easily confer on others so much harmless pleasure. But the little children and dirt-pie manufacturers were presently succeeded by followers of a larger growth, and a number of lads and girls from the factory being let loose at this hour, joined the mob, and began laughing, jeering, hooting, and calling opprobrious names at the Frenchman. Some cried out, "Frenchy! Frenchy!" some exclaimed "Frogs!" one asked for a lock of his hair, which was long and in richly-flowing ringlets; and at length the poor artist began to perceive that he was an object of derision rather than of respect to the rude grinning mob.

It was at this juncture that Madame Fribsby spied the unlucky gentleman with the train at his heels, and heard the scornful shouts with which they assailed him. She ran out of her room, and across the street to the persecuted foreigner; she held out her hand, and, addressing him in his own language, invited him into her abode; and when she had housed him fairly within her door, she stood bravely at the threshold before the gibing factory girls and boys, and said they were a pack of cowards to insult a poor man who could not speak their language, and was alone and without protection. The little crowd, with some ironical cheers and hootings, nevertheless felt the force of Madame Fribsby's vigorous allocution, and retreated before her; for the old lady was rather respected in the place, and her oddity and her kindness had made her many friends there.

Poor Mirobolant was grateful indeed to hear the language of his country ever so ill spoken. Frenchmen pardon our faults in their language much more readily than we excuse their bad English; and will face our blunders throughout a long conversation, without the least propensity to grin. The

rescued artist vowed that Madame Fribsby was his guardian angel, and that he had not as yet met with such suavity and politeness among *les Anglaises*. He was as courteous and complimentary to her as if it was the fairest and noblest of ladies whom he was addressing: for Alcide Mirobolant paid homage after his fashion to all womankind, and never dreamed of a distinction of ranks in the realms of beauty, as his phrase was.

A cream, flavoured with pine-apple — a mayonnaise of lobster, which he flattered himself was not unworthy of his hand, or of her to whom he had the honour to offer it as an homage, and a box of preserved fruits of Provence, were brought by one of the chef's aides-de-camp, in a basket, the next day to the milliner's, and were accompanied with a gallant note to the amiable Madame Fribsbi. "Her kindness," Alcides said, "had made a green place in the desert of his existence, — her suavity would ever contrast in memory with the *grossièreté* of the rustic population, who were not worthy to possess such a jewel." An intimacy of the most confidential nature thus sprang up between the milliner and the chief of the kitchen; but I do not know whether it was with pleasure or mortification that Madame received the declarations of friendship which the young Alcides proffered to her, for he persisted in calling her "*La respectable Fribsbi*," "*La vertueuse Fribsbi*," — and in stating that he should consider her as his mother, while he hoped she would regard him as her son. Ah! it was not very long ago, Fribsby thought, that words had been addressed to her in that dear French language, indicating a different sort of attachment. And she sighed as she looked up at the picture of her Carabineer. For it is surprising how young some people's hearts remain when their heads have need of a front or a little hair-dye, — and, at this

moment, Madame Fribsby, as she told young Alcide, felt as romantic as a girl of eighteen.

When the conversation took this turn — and at their first intimacy Madame Fribsby was rather inclined so to lead it — Alcide always politely diverged to another subject: it was as his mother that he persisted in considering the good milliner. He would recognise her in no other capacity, and with that relationship the gentle lady was forced to content herself, when she found how deeply the artist's heart was engaged elsewhere.

He was not long before he described to her the subject and origin of his passion.

"I declared myself to her," said Alcide, laying his hand on his heart, "in a manner which was as novel as I am charmed to think it was agreeable. Where cannot Love penetrate, respectable Madame Fribsbi? Cupid is the father of invention! — I inquired of the domestics what were the *plats* of which Mademoiselle partook with most pleasure; and built up my little battery accordingly. On a day when her parents had gone to dine in the world (and I am grieved to say that a gr^ossier dinner at a restaurateur, in the Boulevard, or in the Palais Royal, seemed to form the delights of these unrefined persons), the charming Miss entertained some comrades of the pension; and I advised myself to send up a little repast suitable to so delicate young palates. Her lovely name is Blanche. The veil of the maiden is white; the wreath of roses which she wears is white. I determined that my dinner should be as spotless as the snow. At her accustomed hour, and instead of the rude *gigot à l'eau*, which was ordinarily served at her too simple table, I sent her up a little *potage à la Reine* — *à la Reine Blanche* I called it, — as white as her own tint — and confectioned with the most fragrant cream and almonds. I then offered up at her shrine a *filet de merlan à*

l'Agnes, and a delicate *plat*, which I have designated as *Eperlan à la Sainte-Thérèse*, and of which my charming Miss partook with pleasure. I followed this by two little *entrées* of sweet-bread and chicken; and the only brown thing which I permitted myself in the entertainment was a little roast of lamb, which I laid in a meadow of spinaches, surrounded with croustillons, representing sheep, and ornamented with daisies and other savage flowers. After this came my second service: a pudding à *la Reine Elisabeth* (who, Madame Fribsbi knows, was a maiden princess); a dish of opal-coloured plover's eggs, which I called *Nid de tourtereaux à la Roucoule*; placing in the midst of them two of those tender volatiles, billing each other, and confectioned with butter; a basket containing little *gateaux* of apricots, which, I know, all young ladies adore; and a jelly of marasquin, bland, insinuating, intoxicating as the glance of beauty. This I designated *Ambroisie de Calypso à la Souveraine de mon Cœur*. And when the ice was brought in — an ice of *plombière* and cherries — how do you think I had shaped them, Madame Fribsbi? In the form of two hearts united with an arrow, on which I had laid, before it entered, a bridal veil in cut-paper, surmounted by a wreath of virginal orange-flowers. I stood at the door to watch the effect of this entry. It was but one cry of admiration. The three young ladies filled their glasses with the sparkling A7, and carried me in a toast. I heard it — I heard Miss speak of me — I heard her say, "Tell Monsieur Mirobolant that we thank him — we admire him — we love him!" My feet almost failed me as I spoke.

"Since that, can I have any reason to doubt that the young artist has made some progress in the heart of the English Miss? I am modest, but my glass informs me that I am not ill-looking. Other victories have convinced me of the fact."

"Dangerous man!" cried the milliner.

"The blond misses of Albion see nothing in the dull inhabitants of their brumous isle, which can compare with the ardour and vivacity of the children of the South. We bring our sunshine with us; we are Frenchmen, and accustomed to conquer. Were it not for this affair of the heart, and my determination to marry an Anglaise, do you think I would stop in this island, (which is not altogether ungrateful, since I have found here a tender mother in the respectable Madame Fribsbi), in this island, in this family? My genius would use itself in the company of these rustics — the poesy of my art cannot be understood by these carnivorous insularies. No — the men are odious, but the women — the women! I own, dear Fribsbi, are seducing! I have vowed to marry one; and as I cannot go into your markets and purchase, according to the custom of the country, I am resolved to adopt another custom, and fly with one to Gretna Green. The blonde Miss will go. She is fascinated. Her eyes have told me so. The white dove wants but the signal to fly."

"Have you any correspondence with her?" asked Fribsby, in amazement, and not knowing whether the young lady or the lover might be labouring under a romantic delusion.

"I correspond with her by means of my art. She partakes of dishes which I make expressly for her. I insinuate to her thus a thousand hints, which, as she is perfectly spiritual, she receives. But I want other intelligences near her."

"There is Pincott, her maid," said Madame Fribsby, who, by aptitude or education, seemed to have some knowledge of affairs of the heart, but the great artist's brow darkened at this suggestion.

"Madame," he said, "there are points upon which a gallant man ought to silence himself; though, if he break the secret, he may do so with the least impropriety to his best

friend — his adopted mother. Know then, that there is a cause why Miss Fincott should be hostile to me — a cause not uncommon with your sex — jealousy."

"Perfidious monster!" said the confidante.

"Ah, no," said the artist, with a deep bass voice, and a tragic accent worthy of the Porte St. Martin and his favourite melo-dramas, "Not perfidious, but fatal. Yes, I am a fatal man, Madame Fribsbi. To inspire hopeless passion is my destiny. I cannot help it that women love me. Is it my fault that that young woman deperishes and languishes to the view of the eye, consumed by a flame which I cannot return? Listen! There are others in this family who are similarly unhappy. The governess of the young Milor has encountered me in my walks, and looked at me in a way which can bear but one interpretation. And Milady herself, who is of mature age, but who has oriental blood, has once or twice addressed compliments to the lonely artist which can admit of no mistake. I avoid the household, I seek solitude, I undergo my destiny. I can marry but one, and am resolved it shall be to a lady of your nation. And, if her fortune is sufficient, I think Miss would be the person who would be most suitable. I wish to ascertain what her means are before I lead her to Gretna Grin."

Whether Alcides was as irresistible a conqueror as his namesake, or whether he was simply crazy, is a point which must be left to the reader's judgment. But the latter, if he has had the benefit of much French acquaintance, has perhaps met with men amongst them who fancied themselves almost as invincible; and who, if you credit them, have made equal havoc in the hearts of *les Anglaises*.

CHAPTER III.

Contains both love and jealousy.

OUR readers have already heard Sir Francis Clavering's candid opinion of the lady who had given him her fortune and restored him to his native country and home, and it must be owned that the Baronet was not far wrong in his estimate of his wife, and that Lady Clavering was not the wisest or the best educated of women. She had had a couple of years' education in Europe, in a suburb of London, which she persisted in calling Ackney to her dying day, whence she had been summoned to join her father at Calcutta at the age of fifteen. And it was on her voyage thither, on board the *Ramchunder* East Indiaman, Captain Bragg, in which ship she had two years previously made her journey to Europe, that she formed the acquaintance of her first husband, Mr. Amory, who was third mate of the vessel in question.

We are not going to enter into the early part of Lady Clavering's history, but Captain Bragg, under whose charge Miss Snell went out to her father, who was one of the Captain's consignees, and part owner of the *Ramchunder* and many other vessels, found reason to put the rebellious rascal of a mate in irons, until they reached the Cape, where the Captain left his officer behind; and finally delivered his ward to her father at Calcutta, after a stormy and perilous voyage in which the *Ramchunder* and the cargo and passengers incurred no small danger and damage.

Some months afterwards Amory made his appearance at Calcutta, having worked his way out before the mast from the Cape — married the rich Attorney's daughter in spite of that old speculator — set up as indigo planter and failed — set up

as agent and failed again — set up as editor of the "Sunderbund Pilot" and failed again — quarrelling ceaselessly with his father-in-law and his wife during the progress of all these mercantile transactions and disasters, and ending his career finally with a crash which compelled him to leave Calcutta and go to New South Wales. It was in the course of these luckless proceedings, that Mr. Amory probably made the acquaintance of Sir Jasper Rogers, the respected Judge of the Supreme Court of Calcutta, who has been mentioned before: and, as the truth must out, it was by making an improper use of his father-in-law's name, who could write perfectly well, and had no need of an amanuensis, that fortune finally forsook Mr. Amory and caused him to abandon all further struggles with her.

Not being in the habit of reading the Calcutta law-reports very assiduously, the European public did not know of these facts as well as people did in Bengal, and Mrs. Amory and her father, finding her residence in India not a comfortable one, it was agreed that the lady should return to Europe, whither she came with her little daughter Betsy or Blanche, then four years old. They were accompanied by Betsy's nurse, who has been presented to the reader in the last chapter as the confidential maid of Lady Clavering, Mrs. Bonner: and Captain Bragg took a house for them in the near neighbourhood of his residence in Pocklington-street.

It was a very hard bitter summer, and the rain it rained every day for some time after Mrs. Amory's arrival. Bragg was very pompous and disagreeable, perhaps ashamed, perhaps anxious, to get rid of the Indian lady. She believed that all the world in London was talking about her husband's disaster, and that the King and Queen and the Court of Directors were aware of her unlucky history. She had a good

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allowance from her father; she had no call to live in England; and she determined to go abroad. Away she went, then, glad to escape the gloomy surveillance of the odious bully, Captain Bragg. People had no objection to receive her at the continental towns where she stopped, and at the various boarding-houses, where she royally paid her way. She called Hackney Ackney, to be sure, (though otherwise she spoke English with a little foreign twang, very curious and not unpleasant); she dressed amazingly; she was conspicuous for her love of eating and drinking, and prepared curries and pillaws at every boarding-house which she frequented; but her singularities of language and behaviour only gave a zest to her society, and Mrs. Amory was deservedly popular. She was the most good-natured, jovial, and generous of women. She was up to any party of pleasure by whomsoever proposed. She brought three times more champagne and fowls and ham to the picnics than any one else. She took endless boxes for the play, and tickets for the masked balls, and gave them away to everybody. She paid the boarding-house people months beforehand; she helped poor shabby mustachiod bucks and dowagers, whose remittances had not arrived, with constant supplies from her purse; and in this way she tramped through Europe, and appeared at Brussels, at Paris, at Milan, at Naples, at Rome, as her fancy led her. News of Amory's death reached her at the latter place, where Captain Clavering was then staying, unable to pay his hotel bill, as, indeed, was his friend, the Chevalier Strong, and the good-natured widow married the descendant of the ancient house of Clavering — professing, indeed, no particular grief for the scapegrace of a husband whom she had lost. We have brought her thus up to the present time when she was mistress of Clavering Park, in the midst of which Mr. Pinckney, the celebrated painter, pourtrayed her with her little boy by her side.

Missy followed her mamma in most of her peregrinations, and so learned a deal of life. She had a governess for some time; and after her mother's second marriage, the benefit of Madame de Caramel's select pension in the Champs Elysées. When the Claverings came to England, she of course came with them. It was only within a few years, after the death of her grandfather, and the birth of her little brother, that she began to understand that her position in life was altered, and that Miss Amory, nobody's daughter, was a very small personage in a house compared with Master Francis Clavering, heir to an ancient baronetcy, and a noble estate. But for little Frank, she would have been an heiress, in spite of her father: and though she knew, and cared not much about money, of which she never had any stint, and though she was a romantic little Muse, as we have seen, yet she could not reasonably be grateful to the persons who had so contributed to change her condition: nor, indeed, did she understand what the latter really was, until she had made some further progress, and acquired more accurate knowledge in the world.

But this was clear, that her step-father was dull and weak: that mamma dropped her H's, and was not refined in manners or appearance; and that little Frank was a spoiled quarrelsome urchin, always having his way, always treading upon her feet, always upsetting his dinner on her dresses, and keeping her out of her inheritance. None of these, as she felt, could comprehend her: and her solitary heart naturally pined for other attachments, and she sought around her where to bestow the precious boon of her unoccupied affection.

This dear girl, then, from want of sympathy, or other cause, made herself so disagreeable at home, and frightened her mother, and bored her step-father so much, that they were quite as anxious as she could be that she should settle for

herself in life; and hence Sir Francis Clavering's desire expressed to his friend, in the last chapter, that Mrs. Strong should die, and that he would take Blanche to himself as a second Mrs. Strong.

But as this could not be, any other person was welcome to win her: and a smart young fellow, well-looking and well-educated, like our friend Arthur Pendennis, was quite free to propose for her if he had a mind, and would have been received with open arms by Lady Clavering as a son-in-law, had he had the courage to come forward as a competitor for Miss Amory's hand.

Mr. Pen, however, besides other drawbacks, chose to entertain an extreme diffidence about himself. He was ashamed of his late failures, of his idle and nameless condition, of the poverty which he had brought on his mother by his folly, and there was as much of vanity as remorse in his present state of doubt and distrust. How could he ever hope for such a prize as this brilliant Blanche Amory, who lived in a fine park and mansion, and was waited on by a score of grand domestics, whilst a maid-servant brought in their meagre meal at Fair Oaks, and his mother was obliged to pinch and manage to make both ends meet? Obstacles seemed to him insurmountable, which would have vanished had he marched manfully upon them: and he preferred despairing, or dallying with his wishes, — or perhaps he had not positively shaped them as yet, — to attempting to win gallantly the object of his desire. Many a young man fails by that species of vanity called shyness, who might, for the asking, have his will.

But we do not pretend to say that Pen had, as yet, ascertained his: or that he was doing much more than thinking about falling in love. Miss Amory was charming and lively. She fascinated and cajoled him by a thousand arts or natural graces or flatteries. But there were lurking reasons and

doubts, besides shyness and vanity, withholding him. In spite of her cleverness, and her protestations, and her fascinations, Pen's mother had divined the girl, and did not trust her. Mrs. Pendennis saw Blanche light-minded and frivolous detected many wants in her which offended the pure and pious-minded lady; a want of reverence for her parents, and for things more sacred, Helen thought: worldliness and selfishness couched under pretty words and tender expressions. Laura and Pen battled these points strongly at first with the widow — Laura being as yet enthusiastic about her new friend, and Pen not far-gone enough in love to attempt any concealment of his feelings. He would laugh at these objections of Helen's, and say, "Psha, mother! you are jealous about Laura — all women are jealous."

But when, in the course of a month or two, and by watching the pair with that anxiety with which brooding women watch over their sons' affections — and in acknowledging which, I have no doubt there is a sexual jealousy on the mother's part, and a secret pang — when Helen saw that the intimacy appeared to make progress, that the two young people were perpetually finding pretexts to meet, and that Miss Blanche was at Fairoaks or Mr. Pen at the Park every day, the poor widow's heart began to fail her — her darling project seemed to vanish before her; and, giving way to her weakness, she fairly told Pen one day what her views and longings were; that she felt herself breaking, and not long for this world, and that she hoped and prayed before she went, that she might see her two children one. The late events, Pen's life and career and former passion for the actress, had broken the spirit of this tender lady. She felt that he had escaped her, and was in the maternal nest no more; and she clung with a sickening fondness to Laura, Laura who had been left to her by Francis in Heaven.

Pen kissed and soothed her in his grand patronising way. He had seen something of this, he had long thought his mother wanted to make this marriage — did Laura know anything of it? (Not she, — Mrs. Pendennis said — not for worlds would she have breathed a word of it to Laura) — “Well, well, there was time enough, his mother wouldn’t die,” Pen said, laughingly: “he wouldn’t hear of any such thing, and as for the Muse, she is too grand a lady to think about poor little me — and as for Laura, who knows that she would have me. She would do anything you told her, to be sure. But am I worthy of her?”

“O, Pen, you might be,” was the widow’s reply; not that Mr. Pen ever doubted that he was; and a feeling of indefinable pleasure and self-complacency came over him as he thought over this proposal, and imaged Laura to himself, as his memory remembered her for years past, always fair and open, kindly and pious, cheerful, tender and true. He looked at her with brightening eyes as she came in from the garden at the end of this talk, her cheeks rather flushed, her looks frank and smiling — a basket of roses in her hand.

She took the finest of them and brought it to Mrs. Pendennis, who was refreshed by the odour and colour of these flowers; and hung over her fondly and gave it to her.

“And I might have this prize for the asking!” Pen thought, with a thrill of triumph, as he looked at the kindly girl. “Why, she is as beautiful and as generous as her roses.” The image of the two women remained for ever after in his mind, and he never recalled it but the tears came into his eyes.

Before very many weeks’ intimacy with her new acquaintance, however, Miss Laura was obliged to give in to Helen’s opinion, and own that the Muse was selfish, unkind, and inconstant. Of course Blanche confided to her bosom friend all the little griefs and domestic annoyances; how the

family could not comprehend her, and she moved among them an isolated being; how her poor mamma's education had been neglected, and she was forced to blush for her blunders; how Sir Francis was a weak person deplorably unintellectual, and only happy when smoking his odious cigars; how, since the birth of her little brother, she had seen her mother's precious affection, which she valued more than anything in life, estranged from her once darling daughter; how she was alone, alone, alone in the world.

But these griefs, real and heart-rending though they might be to a young lady of exquisite sensibility, did not convince Laura of the propriety of Blanche's conduct in many small incidents of life. Little Frank, for instance, might be very provoking, and might have deprived Blanche of her mamma's affection, but this was no reason why Blanche should box the child's ears because he upset a glass of water over her drawing, and why she should call him many opprobrious names in the English and French language; and the preference accorded to little Frank was certainly no reason why Blanche should give herself imperial airs of command towards the boy's governess, and send that young lady upon messages through the house to bring her book or to fetch her pocket-handkerchief. When a domestic performed an errand for honest Laura, she was always thankful and pleased; whereas she could not but perceive that the little Muse had not the slightest scruple in giving her commands to all the world round about her, and in disturbing anybody's ease or comfort, in order to administer to her own. It was Laura's first experience in friendship; and it pained the kind creature's heart to be obliged to give up as delusions, one by one, those charms and brilliant qualities in which her fancy had dressed her new friend, and to find that the fascinating little fairy was but a mortal, and not a very amiable mortal after all. What

generous person is there that has not been so deceived in his time? — what person, perhaps, that has not so disappointed others in his turn?

After the scene with little Frank, in which that refractory son and heir of the house of Clavering had received the compliments in French and English, and the accompanying box on the ear from his sister, Miss Laura, who had plenty of humour, could not help calling to mind some very touching and tender verses which the Muse had read to her out of *Mes Larmes*, and which began, "My pretty baby brother, may angels guard thy rest," in which the Muse, after complimenting the baby upon the station in life which it was about to occupy, and contrasting it with her own lonely condition, vowed nevertheless that the angel boy would never enjoy such affection as hers was, or find in the false world before him anything so constant and tender as a sister's heart. "It may be," the forlorn one said, "it may be, you will slight it, my pretty baby sweet, You will spurn me from your bosom, I'll cling around your feet! O let me, let me, love you! the world will prove to you As false as 't is to others, but *I* am ever true." And behold the Muse was boxing the darling brother's ears instead of kneeling at his feet, and giving Miss Laura her first lesson in the Cynical philosophy — not quite her first, however, — something like this selfishness and waywardness, something like this contrast between practice and poetry, between grand versified aspirations and every-day life, she had witnessed at home in the person of our young friend Mr. Pen.

But then Pen was different. Pen was a man. It seemed natural somehow that he should be self-willed and should have his own way. And under his waywardness and selfishness, indeed there was a kind and generous heart. O it was hard that such a diamond should be changed away against

such a false stone as this. In a word, Laura began to be tired of her admired Blanche. She had assayed her and found her not true; and her former admiration and delight, which she had expressed with her accustomed generous artlessness, gave way to a feeling, which we shall not call contempt, but which was very near it; and which caused Laura to adopt towards Miss Amory, a grave and tranquil tone of superiority, which was at first by no means to the Muse's liking. Nobody likes to be found out, or having held a high place, to submit to step down.

The consciousness that this event was impending did not serve to increase Miss Blanche's good humour, and as it made her peevish and dissatisfied with herself, it probably rendered her even less agreeable to the persons round about her. So there arose one fatal day, a battle-royal between dearest Blanche and dearest Laura, in which the friendship between them was all but slain outright. Dearest Blanche had been unusually capricious and wicked on this day. She had been insolent to her mother; savage with little Frank; odiously impertinent in her behaviour to the boy's governess; and intolerably cruel to Pincott, her attendant. Not venturing to attack her friend (for the little tyrant was of a timid feline nature, and only used her claws upon those who were weaker than herself) she maltreated all these, and especially poor Pincott, who was menial, confidante, companion, (slave always,) according to the caprice of her young mistress.

This girl, who had been sitting in the room with the young ladies, being driven thence in tears, occasioned by the cruelty of her mistress, and raked with a parting sarcasm as she went sobbing from the door, Laura fairly broke out into a loud and indignant invective — wondered how one so young could forget the deference owing to her elders as well as

to her inferiors in station; and professing so much sensibility of her own, could torture the feelings of others so wantonly. Laura told her friend that her conduct was absolutely wicked, and that she ought to ask pardon of Heaven on her knees for it. And having delivered herself of a hot and voluble speech whereof the delivery astonished the speaker as much almost as her auditor, she ran to her bonnet and shawl, and went home across the park in a great flurry and perturbation, and to the surprise of Mrs. Pendennis, who had not expected her until night.

Alone with Helen, Laura gave an account of the scene, and gave up her friend henceforth. "O Mamma," she said, "you were right; Blanche, who seems so soft and so kind, is, as you have said, selfish and cruel. She who is always speaking of her affections can have no heart. No honest girl would afflict a mother so, or torture a dependant; and— and, I give her up from this day, and I will have no other friend but you."

On this the two ladies went through the osculatory ceremony which they were in the habit of performing, and Mrs. Pendennis got a great secret comfort from the little quarrel—for Laura's confession seemed to say, "That girl can never be a wife for Pen, for she is light-minded and heartless, and quite unworthy of our noble hero. He will be sure to find out her unworthiness for his own part, and then he will be saved from this flighty creature, and awake out of his delusion."

But Miss Laura did not tell Mrs. Pendennis, perhaps did not acknowledge to herself, what had been the real cause of the day's quarrel. Being in a verry wicked mood, and bent upon mischief everywhere, the little wicked Muse of a Blanche had very soon begun her tricks. Her darling Laura had come to pass a long day; and as they were sitting in

her own room together, had chosen to bring the conversation round to the subject of Mr. Pen.

"I am afraid he is sadly fickle," Miss Blanche observed; "Mrs. Pybus, and many more Clavering people, have told us all about the actress."

"I was quite a child when it happened, and I don't know anything about it," Laura answered, blushing very much.

"He used her very ill," Blanche said, wagging her little head. "He was false to her."

"I am sure he was not," Laura cried out; "he acted most generously by her: he wanted to give up everything to marry her. It was she that was false to him. He nearly broke his heart about it: he —"

"I thought you didn't know anything about the story, dearest," interposed Miss Blanche.

"Mamma has said so," said Laura.

"Well, he is very clever," continued the other little dear.

"What a sweet poet he is! Have you ever read his poems?"

"Only the 'Fisherman and the Diver,' which he translated for us, and his Prize Poem, which didn't get the prize; and, indeed, I thought it very pompous and prosy," Laura said, laughing.

"Has he never written *you* any poems, then, love?" asked Miss Amory.

"No, my dear," said Miss Bell.

Blanche ran up to her friend, kissed her fondly, called her my dearest Laura at least three times, looked her archly in the face, nodded her head, and said, "Promise to tell no-o-body, and I will show you something."

And tripping across the room daintily to a little mother-of-pearl inlaid desk, she opened it with a silver key, and took out two or three papers crumpled and rather stained with green, which she submitted to her friend. Laura took

them and read them. They were love-verses sure enough — something about Undine — about a Naiad — about a river. She looked at them for a long time; but in truth the lines were not very distinct before her eyes.

"And you have answered them, Blanche?" she asked, putting them back.

"O no! not for worlds, dearest," the other said: and when her dearest Laura had *quite* done with the verses, she tripped back, and popped them again into the pretty desk.

Then she went to her piano, and sang two or three songs of Rossini, whose flourishes of music her flexible little voice could execute to perfection, and Laura sate by, vaguely listening as she performed these pieces. What was Miss Bell thinking about the while? She hardly knew; but sate there silent as the songs rolled by. After this concert the young ladies were summoned to the room where luncheon was served; and whither they of course went with their arms round each other's waists.

And it could not have been jealousy or anger on Laura's part which had made her silent; for, after they had tripped along the corridor and descended the steps, and were about to open the door which leads into the hall, Laura paused, and looking her friend kindly and frankly in the face, kissed her with a sisterly warmth.

Something occurred after this — Master Frank's manner of eating, probably, or mamma's blunders, or Sir Francis smelling of cigars — which vexed Miss Blanche, and she gave way to that series of naughtinesses whereof we have spoken, and which ended in the above little quarrel.

CHAPTER IV.

A house full of visitors.

THE difference between the girls did not last long. Laura was always too eager to forgive and be forgiven, and as for Miss Blanche, her hostilities, never very long or durable, had not been provoked by the above scene. Nobody cares about being accused of wickedness. No vanity is hurt by that sort of charge: Blanche was rather pleased than provoked by her friend's indignation, which never would have been raised but for a cause which both knew, though neither spoke of.

And so Laura, with a sigh, was obliged to confess that the romantic part of her first friendship was at an end, and that the object of it was only worthy of a very ordinary sort of regard.

As for Blanche, she instantly composed a copy of touching verses, setting forth her desertion and disenchantment. It was only the old story she wrote, of love meeting with coldness, and fidelity returned by neglect; and some new neighbours arriving from London about this time, in whose family there were daughters, Miss Amory had the advantage of selecting an eternal friend from one of these young ladies, and imparting her sorrows and disappointments to this new sister. The tall footmen came but seldom now with notes to the sweet Laura; the pony-carriage was but rarely dispatched to Fair-oaks to be at the orders of the ladies there. Blanche adopted a sweet look of suffering martyrdom when Laura came to see her. The other laughed at her friend's sentimental mood, and treated it with a good humour that was by no means respectful.

But if Miss Blanche found new female friends to console her, the faithful historian is also bound to say, that she dis-

covered some acquaintances of the other sex who seemed to give her consolation too. If ever this artless young creature met a young man, and had ten minutes' conversation with him in a garden walk, in a drawing-room window, or in the intervals of a waltz, she confided in him, so to speak — made play with her beautiful eyes — spoke in a tone of tender interest, and simple and touching appeal, and left him, to perform the same pretty little drama in behalf of his successor.

When the Claverings first came down to the Park, there were very few audiences before whom Miss Blanche could perform: hence Pen had all the benefits of her glances, and confidences, and the drawing-room window, or the garden walk all to himself. In the town of Clavering, it has been said, there were actually no young men: in the near surrounding country, only a curate or two, or a rustic young squire, with large feet, and ill-made clothes. To the dragoons quartered at Chatteries the Baronet made no overtures: it was unluckily his own regiment: he had left it on bad terms with some officers of the corps — an ugly business about a horse bargain — a disputed play account — blind-Hookey — a white feather — who need ask? — it is not our business to inquire too closely into the by-gones of our characters, except in so far as their previous history appertains to the development of this present story.

But the autumn, and the end of the Parliamentary Session, and the London season, brought one or two country families down to their houses, and filled tolerably the neighbouring little watering-place of Baymouth, and opened our friend Mr. Bingley's Theatre Royal at Chatteries, and collected the usual company at the Assizes and Race-balls there. Up to this time, the old county families had been rather shy of our friends of Clavering Park. The Fogys of Drummington; the Squares of Tozely Park; the Welbores of The Barrow, &c. All sorts

of stories were current among these folks regarding the family at Clavering; — indeed, nobody ought to say that people in the country have no imagination, who heard them talk about new neighbours. About Sir Francis and his Lady, and her birth and parentage, about Miss Amory, about Captain Strong, there had been endless histories which need not be recapitulated; and the family of the Park had been three months in the county before the great people around began to call.

But at the end of the season, the Earl of Trehawke, Lord Lieutenant of the County, coming to Eyrie Castle, and the Countess Dowager of Rockminster, whose son was also a magnate of the land, to occupy a mansion on the Marine Parade at Baymouth — these great folks came publicly, immediately, and in state, to call upon the family of Clavering Park; and the carriages of the county families speedily followed in the track, which had been left in the avenue by their lordly wheels.

It was then that Mirobolant began to have an opportunity of exercising that skill which he possessed, and of forgetting, in the occupations of his art, the pangs of love. It was then that the large footmen were too much employed at Clavering Park to be able to bring messages, or dally over the cup of small beer with the poor little maids at Fair Oaks. It was then that Blanche found other dear friends than Laura, and other places to walk in besides the river side, where Pen was fishing. He came day after day, and whipped the stream, but the "fish, fish!" wouldn't do their duty, nor the Peri appear. And here, though in strict confidence, and with a request that the matter go no further, we may as well allude to a delicate business, of which previous hint has been given. Mention has been made, in a former page, of a certain hollow tree, at which Pen used to take his station when engaged in his passion for Miss Fotheringay, and the cavity of which he afterwards used for other purposes than to insert his baits and fishing-cans in. The truth

is, he converted this tree into a post-office. Under a piece of moss and a stone, he used to put little poems, or letters equally poetical, which were addressed to a certain Undine, or Naiad who frequented the stream, and which, once or twice, were replaced by a receipt in the shape of a flower, or by a modest little word or two of acknowledgment, written in a delicate hand, in French or English, and on pink scented paper. Certainly, Miss Amory used to walk by this stream, as we have seen; and it is a fact that she used pink scented paper for her correspondence. But after the great folks had invaded Clavering Park, and the family coach passed out of the lodge-gates, evening after evening, on their way to the other great country houses, nobody came to fetch Pen's letters at the post-office; the white paper was not exchanged for the pink, but lay undisturbed under its stone and its moss, whilst the tree was reflected into the stream, and the Brawl went rolling by. There was not much in the letters certainly; in the pink notes scarcely anything — merely a little word or two, half jocular, half sympathetic, such as might be written by any young lady. But oh, you silly Pendennis, if you wanted this one, why did you not speak? Perhaps neither party was in earnest. You were only playing at being in love, and the sportive little Undine was humouring you at the same play.

But if a man is balked at this game; he not unfrequently loses his temper; and when nobody came any more for Pen's poems, he began to look upon those compositions in a very serious light. He felt almost tragical and romantic again, as in his first affair of the heart: — at any rate he was bent upon having an explanation. One day he went to the Hall, and there was a room-full of visitors: on another, Miss Amory was not to be seen; she was going to a ball that night, and was lying down to take a little sleep. Pen cursed balls, and the narrowness of his means, and the humility of his position

in the county that caused him to be passed over by the givers of these entertainments. On a third occasion, Miss Amory was in the garden, and he ran thither; she was walking there in state with no less personages than the Bishop and Bishopess of Chatteries and the episcopal family, who scowled at him, and drew up in great dignity when he was presented to them, and they heard his name. The Right Reverend Prelate had heard it before, and also of the little transaction in the Dean's garden.

"The Bishop says you're a sad young man," good-natured Lady Clavering whispered to him. "What have you been a doing of? Nothink, I hope, to vex such a dear Mar as yours? How is your dear Mar? Why don't she come and see me? We ain't seen her this ever such a time. We're a goin about a gaddin, so that we don't see no neighbours now. Give my love to her and Laurar, and come all to dinner to-morrow."

Mrs. Pendennis was too unwell to come out, but Laura and Pen came, and there was a great party, and Pen only got an opportunity of a hurried word with Miss Amory. "You never come to the river now," he said.

"I can't," said Blanche, "the house is full of people."

"Undine has left the stream," Mr. Pen went on, choosing to be poetical.

"She never ought to have gone there," Miss Amory answered. "She won't go again. It was very foolish: very wrong: it was only play. Besides, you have other consolations at home," she added, looking him full in the face an instant, and dropping her eyes.

If he wanted her, why did he not speak then? She might have said "Yes" even then. But as she spoke of other consolations at home, he thought of Laura, so affectionate and so pure, and of his mother at home, who had bent her

fond heart upon uniting him with her adopted daughter. "Blanche!" he began, in a vexed tone, — "Miss Amory!"

"Laura is looking at us, Mr. Pendennis," the young lady said. "I must go back to the company," and she ran off, leaving Mr. Pendennis to bite his nails in perplexity, and to look out into the moonlight in the garden.

Laura indeed was looking at Pen. She was talking with, or appearing to listen to the talk of, Mr. Pynsent, Lord Rockminster's son, and grandson of the Dowager Lady, who was seated in state in the place of honour, gravely receiving Lady Clavering's bad grammar, and patronising the vacuous Sir Francis, whose interest in the county she was desirous to secure. Pynsent and Pen had been at Oxbridge together, where the latter, during his heyday of good fortune and fashion, had been the superior of the young patrician, and perhaps rather supercilious towards him. They had met for the first time, since they parted at the University, at the table to-day, and given each other that exceedingly impertinent and amusing demi-nod of recognition which is practised in England only, and only to perfection by University men, — and which seems to say, "Confound you — what do you do here?"

"I knew that man at Oxbridge," Mr. Pynsent said to Miss Bell — "a Mr. Pendennis, I think."

"Yes," said Miss Bell —

"He seems rather sweet upon Miss Amory," the gentleman went on. Laura looked at them, and perhaps thought so too, but said nothing.

"A man of large property in the county, ain't he? He used to talk about representing it. He used to speak at the Union. Whereabouts do his estates lie?"

Laura smiled. "His estates lie on the other side of the river, near the lodge gate. He is my cousin, and I live there."

"Where?" asked Mr. Pynsent, with a laugh.

"Why, on the other side of the river, at Fair Oaks," answered Miss Bell.

"Many pheasants there? Cover looks rather good," said the simple gentleman.

Laura smiled again. "We have nine hens and a cock, a pig, and an old pointer."

"Pendennis don't preserve then?" continued Mr. Pynsent.

"You should come and see him," the girl said, laughing, and greatly amused at the notion that her Pen was a great county gentleman, and perhaps had given himself out to be such.

"Indeed, I quite long to renew our acquaintance," Mr. Pynsent said, gallantly, and with a look which fairly said, "It is you that I would like to come and see" — to which look and speech Miss Laura vouchsafed a smile, and made a little bow.

Here Blanche came stepping up with her most fascinating smile and ogle, and begged dear Laura to come and take the second in a song. Laura was ready to do anything good-natured, and went to the piano; by which Mr. Pynsent listened as long as the duet lasted, and until Miss Amory began for herself, when he strode away.

"What a nice, frank, amiable, well-bred girl that is, Wagg," said Mr. Pynsent to a gentleman who had come over with him from Baymouth — "the tall one I mean, with the ringlets and the red lips — monstrous red, ain't they?"

"What do you think of the girl of the house?" asked Mr. Wagg.

"I think she's a lean scraggy humbug;" said Mr. Pynsent, with great candour. "She drags her shoulders out of her dress: she never lets her eyes alone: and she goes simpering and ogling about like a French waiting-maid."

"Pynsent, be civil," cried the other, "somebody can hear."

"Oh, it's Pendennis of Boniface," Mr. Pynsent said. "Fine evening, Mr. Pendennis; we were just talking of your charming cousin."

"Any relation to my old friend, Major Pendennis?" asked Mr. Wagg.

"His nephew. Had the pleasure of meeting you at Gaunt House," Mr. Pen said with his very best air — the acquaintance between the gentlemen was made in an instant.

In the afternoon of the next day, the two gentlemen who were staying at Clavering Park were found by Mr. Pen on his return from a fishing excursion, in which he had no sport, seated in his mother's drawing-room in comfortable conversation with the widow and her ward. Mr. Pynsent, tall and gaunt, with large red whiskers and an imposing tuft to his chin, was striding over a chair in the intimate neighbourhood of Miss Laura. She was amused by his talk, which was simple, straightforward, rather humorous and keen, and interspersed with homely expressions of a style which is sometimes called slang. It was the first specimen of a young London dandy that Laura had seen or heard: for she had been but a chit at the time of Mr. Foker's introduction at Fair Oaks, nor indeed was that ingenuous gentleman much more than a boy, and his refinement was only that of a school and college.

Mr. Wagg, as he entered the Fair Oaks' premises with his companion, eyed and noted every thing. "Old gardener,"

he said, seeing Mr. John at the lodge — "old red livery waist-coat — clothes hanging out to dry on the gooseberry bushes — blue aprons, white ducks — gad, they must be young Pendennis's white ducks — nobody else wears 'em in the family. Rather a shy place for a sucking county member, ay, Pynsent?"

"Snug little crib," said Mr. Pynsent, "pretty cozy little lawn."

"Mr. Pendennis at home, old gentleman?" Mr. Wagg said to the old domestic. John answered, "No, Master Pendennis was agone out."

"Are the ladies at home?" asked the younger visitor. Mr. John answered, "Yes, they be;" and as the pair walked over the trim gravel, and by the neat shrubberies, up the steps to the hall-door, which old John opened, Mr. Wagg noted everything that he saw; the barometer and the letter-bag, the umbrellas and the ladies' clogs, Pen's hats and tartan wrapper, and old John opening the drawing-room door, to introduce the new comers. Such minutiae attracted Wagg instinctively; he seized them in spite of himself.

"Old fellow does all the work," he whispered to Pynsent. "Caleb Balderstone. Shouldn't wonder if he's the housemaid." The next minute the pair were in the presence of the Fair Oaks' ladies; in whom Pynsent could not help recognising two perfectly well-bred ladies, and to whom Mr. Wagg made his obeisance, with florid bows, and extra courtesy, accompanied with an occasional knowing leer at his companion. Mr. Pynsent did not choose to acknowledge these signals, except by extreme haughtiness towards Mr. Wagg, and particular deference to the ladies. If there was one thing laughable in Mr. Wagg's eyes, it was poverty. He had the soul of a butler who had been brought from his pantry to make fun in the drawing-room. His jokes were plenty, and

his good-nature thoroughly genuine, but he did not seem to understand that a gentleman could wear an old coat, or that a lady could be respectable unless she had her carriage, or employed a French milliner.

"Charming place, Ma'am," said he, bowing to the widow; "noble prospect — delightful to us Cocknies, who seldom see anything but Pall-mall." The widow said simply, she had never been in London but once in her life — before her son was born.

"Fine village, Ma'am, fine village," said Mr. Wagg, "and increasing every day. It'll be quite a large town soon. It's not a bad place to live in for those who can't get the country, and will repay a visit when you honour it."

"My brother, Major Pendennis, has often mentioned your name to us," the widow said, "and we have been very much amused by some of your droll books, Sir," Helen continued, who never could be brought to like Mr. Wagg's books, and detested their tone most thoroughly.

"He is my very good friend," Mr. Wagg said, with a low bow, "and one of the best known men about town, and where known, Ma'am, appreciated — I assure you appreciated. He is with our friend Steyne, at Aix-la-Chapelle. Steyne has a touch of the gout, and so, between ourselves, has your brother. I am going to Stillbrook for the pheasant-shooting, and afterwards to Bareacres, where Pendennis and I shall probably meet;" and he poured out a flood of fashionable talk, introducing the names of a score of peers, and rattling on with breathless spirits, whilst the simple widow listened in silent wonder. What a man, she thought; are all the men of fashion in London like this? I am sure Pen will never be like him.

Mr. Pynsent was in the meanwhile engaged with Miss Laura. He named some of the houses in the neighbourhood

whither he was going, and hoped very much that he should see Miss Bell at some of them. He hoped that her aunt would give her a season in London. He said, that in the next parliament it was probable that he should canvass the county, and he hoped to get Pendennis's interest here. He spoke of Pen's triumph as an orator at Oxbridge, and asked was he coming into parliament too? He talked on very pleasantly, and greatly to Laura's satisfaction, until Pen himself appeared, and, as has been said, found these gentlemen.

Pen behaved very courteously to the pair, now that they had found their way into his quarters; and though he recollected with some twinges a conversation at Oxbridge, when Pynsent was present, and in which after a great debate at the Union, and in the midst of considerable excitement produced by a supper and champagne-cup, — he had announced his intention of coming in for his native county, and had absolutely returned thanks in a fine speech as the future member; yet Mr. Pynsent's manner was so frank and cordial, that Pen hoped Pynsent might have forgotten his little fanfaronnade, and any other braggadocio speeches or actions which he might have made. He suited himself to the tone of the visitors then, and talked about Plinlymmon and Magnus Charters, and the old set at Oxbridge, with careless familiarity and highbred ease, as if he lived with marquises every day, and a duke was no more to him than a village curate.

But at this juncture, and it being then six o'clock in the evening, Betsy, the maid, who did not know of the advent of strangers, walked into the room without any preliminary but that of flinging the door wide open before her, and bearing in her arms a tray, containing three tea-cups, a tea-pot, and a plate of thick bread-and-butter. All Pen's splendour and magnificence vanished away at this — and he faltered and became quite abashed. "What will they think of us?" he

thought: and, indeed, Wagg thrust his tongue in his cheek, thought the tea infinitely contemptible, and leered and winked at Pynsent to that effect.

But to Mr. Pynsent the transaction appeared perfectly simple — there was no reason present to his mind why people should not drink tea at six if they were minded, as well as at any other hour; and he asked of Mr. Wagg, when they went away, “What the devil he was grinning and winking at, and what amused him?”

“Didn’t you see how the cub was ashamed of the thick bread-and-butter? I dare say they’re going to have treacle if they are good. I’ll take an opportunity of telling old Pendennis when we get back to town,” Mr. Wagg chuckled out.

“Don’t see the fun,” said Mr. Pynsent.

“Never thought you did,” growled Wagg between his teeth; and they walked home rather sulkily.

Wagg told the story at dinner very smartly, with wonderful accuracy of observation. He described old John, the clothes that were drying, the clogs in the hall, the drawing-room, and its furniture and pictures; — “Old man with a beak and bald head — *feu* Pendennis I bet two to one; sticking-plaster full-length of a youth in a cap and gown — the present Marquis of Fair Oaks, of course; the widow when young in a miniature, Mrs. Mee; she had the gown on when we came, or a dress made the year after, and the tips cut off the fingers of her gloves which she stitches her son’s collars with; and then the sarving maid came in with their teas; so we left the Earl and the Countess to their bread-and-butter.”

Blanche, near whom he sate as he told this story, and who adored *les hommes d’esprit*, burst out laughing, and called him such an odd, droll creature. But Pynsent, who began to be utterly disgusted with him, broke out in a loud voice, and

said, "I don't know, Mr. Wagg, what sort of ladies you are accustomed to meet in your own family, but by Gad, as far as a first acquaintance can show, I never met two better-bred women in my life, and I hope, Ma'am, you'll call upon em," he added, addressing Lady Rockminster, who was seated at Sir Francis Clavering's right hand.

Sir Francis turned to the guest on his left, and whispered, "That's what I call a sticker for Wagg." And Lady Clavering, giving the young gentleman a delighted tap with her fan, winked her black eyes at him, and said, "Mr. Pynsent, you're a good feller."

After the affair with Blanche, a difference ever so slight, a tone of melancholy, perhaps a little bitter, might be perceived in Laura's converse with her cousin. She seemed to weigh him and find him wanting too; the widow saw the girl's clear and honest eyes watching the young man at times, and a look of almost scorn pass over her face, as he lounged in the room with the women, or lazily sauntered smoking upon the lawn, or lolled under a tree there over a book which he was too listless to read.

"What has happened between you?" eager-sighted Helen asked of the girl. "Something has happened. Has that wicked little Blanche been making mischief? Tell me, Laura."

"Nothing has happened at all," Laura said.

"Then why do you look at Pen so?" asked his mother quickly.

"Look at him, dear mother!" said the girl. "We two women are no society for him: we don't interest him; we are not clever enough for such a genius as Pen. He wastes his life and energies away among us, tied to our apron-strings. He interests himself in nothing: he scarcely cares to go beyond the garden-gate. Even Captain Glanders and Captain Strong pall upon him," she added with a bitter laugh; "and

they are men you know, and our superiors. He will never be happy while he is here. Why, is he not facing the world, and without a profession?"

"We have got enough, with great economy," said the widow, her heart beginning to beat violently. "Pen has spent nothing for months. I'm sure he is very good. I am sure he might be very happy with us."

"Don't agitate yourself so, dear mother," the girl answered. "I don't like to see you so. You should not be sad because Pen is unhappy here. All men are so. They must work. They must make themselves names and a place in the world. Look, the two captains have fought and seen battles; that Mr. Pynsent, who came here, and who will be very rich, is in a public office; he works very hard, he aspires to a name and a reputation. He says Pen was one of the best speakers at Oxbridge, and had as great a character for talent as any of the young gentlemen there. Pen himself laughs at Mr. Wagg's celebrity (and indeed he is a horrid person), and says he is a dunce, and that any body could write his books."

"I am sure they are odious and vulgar," interposed the widow.

"Yet he has a reputation. — You see the County Chronicle says, 'The celebrated Mr. Wagg has been sojourning at Baymouth — let our fashionables and eccentrics look out for something from his caustic pen.' If Pen can write better than this gentleman, and speak better than Mr. Pynsent, why doesn't he? Mamma, he can't make speeches to us; or distinguish himself here. He ought to go away, indeed he ought."

"Dear Laura," said Helen, taking the girl's hand. "Is it kind of you to hurry him so? I have been waiting. I have been saving up money these many months — to — to pay back your advance to us."

"Hush, mother!" Laura cried, embracing her friend hastily. "It was your money, not mine. Never speak about that again. How much money have you saved?"

Helen said there were more than two hundred pounds at the bank, and that she would be enabled to pay off all Laura's money by the end of the next year.

"Give it him—let him have the two hundred pounds. Let him go to London and be a lawyer: be something, be worthy of his mother—and of mine, dearest Mamma," said the good girl; upon which, and with her usual tenderness and emotion, the fond widow declared that Laura was a blessing to her, and the best of girls—and I hope no one in this instance will be disposed to contradict her.

The widow and her daughter had more than one conversation on this subject; and the elder gave way to the superior reason of the honest and stronger minded girl; and, indeed, whenever there was a sacrifice to be made on her part, this kind lady was only too eager to make it. But she took her own way, and did not lose sight of the end she had in view, in imparting these new plans to Pen. One day she told him of these projects, and who it was that had formed them; how it was Laura who insisted upon his going to London and studying; how it was Laura who would not hear of the—the money arrangements when he came back from Oxbridge—being settled just then: how it was Laura whom he had to thank, if indeed he thought that he ought to go.

At that news Pen's countenance blazed up with pleasure, and he hugged his mother to his heart with an ardour that I fear disappointed the fond lady; but she rallied when he said, "By Heaven! she is a noble girl, and may God Almighty bless her! O mother! I have been wearing myself away for months here, longing to work, and not knowing how. I've been fretting over the thoughts of my shame, and my debts,

and my past cursed extravagance and follies. I've suffered infernally. My heart has been half-broken — never mind about that. If I can get a chance to redeem the past, and to do my duty to myself and the best mother in the world, indeed, indeed, I will. I'll be worthy of you yet. Heaven bless you! God bless Laura! Why isn't she here, that I may go and thank her?" Pen went on with more incoherent phrases; paced up and down the room, drank glasses of water, jumped about his mother with a thousand embraces — began to laugh — began to sing — was happier than she had seen him since he was a boy — since he had tasted of the fruit of that awful Tree of Life which, from the beginning, has tempted all mankind.

Laura was not at home. Laura was on a visit to the stately Lady Rockminster, daughter to my Lord Bareacres, sister to the late Lady Pontypool, and by consequence a distant kinswoman of Helen's, as her ladyship, who was deeply versed in genealogy, was the first graciously to point out to the modest country lady. Mr. Pen was greatly delighted at the relationship being acknowledged, though perhaps not over well pleased that Lady Rockminster took Miss Bell home with her for a couple of days to Baymouth, and did not make the slightest invitation to Mr. Arthur Pendennis. There was to be a ball at Baymouth, and it was to be Miss Laura's first appearance. The dowager came to fetch her in her carriage, and she went off with a white dress in her box, happy and blushing, like the rose to which Pen compared her.

This was the night of the ball — a public entertainment at the Baymouth Hotel. "By Jove!" said Pen, "I'll ride over — No, I won't ride, but I'll go too." His mother was charmed that he should do so; and, as he was debating about the conveyance in which he should start for Baymouth, Cap-

tain Strong called opportunely, said he was going himself, and that he would put his horse, The Butcher Boy, into the gig, and drive Pen over.

When the grand company began to fill the house at Clavering Park, the Chevalier Strong, who, as his patron said, was never in the way or out of it, seldom intruded himself upon its society, but went elsewhere to seek his relaxation. "I've seen plenty of grand dinners in my time," he said, "and dined, by Jove, in a company where there was a king and royal duke at top and bottom, and every man along the table had six stars on his coat; but dammy, Glanders, this finery don't suit me; and the English ladies with their confounded buckram airs, and the squires with their politics after dinner, send me to sleep — sink me dead if they don't. I like a place where I can blow my cigar when the cloth is removed, and when I'm thirsty, have my beer in its native pewter." So on a gala day at Clavering Park, the Chevalier would content himself with superintending the arrangements of the table, and drilling the major-domo and servants; and having looked over the bill of fare with Monsieur Mirobolant, would not care to take the least part in the banquet. "Send me up a cutlet and a bottle of claret to my room," this philosopher would say, and from the windows of that apartment, which commanded the terrace and avenue, he would survey the company as they arrived in their carriages, or take a peep at the ladies in the hall through an *œil-de-bœuf* which commanded it from his corridor. And the guests being seated, Strong would cross the park to Captain Glanders's cottage at Clavering, or to pay the landlady a visit at the Clavering Arms, or to drop in upon Madame Fribsby over her novel and tea. Wherever the Chevalier went he was welcome, and whenever he came away a smell of hot brandy and water lingered behind him.

The Butcher Boy — not the worst horse in Sir Francis's

stable — was appropriated to Captain Strong's express use; and the old Campaigner saddled him or brought him home at all hours of the day or night, and drove or rode him up and down the country. Where there was a public-house with a good tap of beer — where there was a tenant with a pretty daughter who played on the piano — to Chatteries, to the play, or the barracks — to Baymouth, if any fun was on foot there; to the rural fairs or races, the Chevalier and his brown horse made their way continually; and this worthy gentleman lived at free quarters in a friendly country. The Butcher Boy soon took Pen and the Chevalier to Baymouth. The latter was as familiar with the hotel and landlord there as with every other inn round about; and having been accommodated with a bedroom to dress, they entered the ball-room. The Chevalier was splendid. He wore three little gold crosses in a brochette on the portly breast of his blue coat, and looked like a foreign field-marshal.

The ball was public and all sorts of persons were admitted and encouraged to come, young Pynsent having views upon the county, and Lady Rockminster being patroness of the ball. There was a quadrille for the aristocracy at one end, and select benches for the people of fashion. Towards this end the Chevalier did not care to penetrate far (as he said he did not care for the nobs); but in the other part of the room he knew everybody — the wine-merchants', innkeepers', tradesmen's solicitors', squire-farmers' daughters, their sires and brothers, and plunged about shaking hands.

"Who is that man with the blue ribbon and the three-pointed star?" asked Pen. A gentleman in black with ringlets and a tuft stood gazing fiercely about him, with one hand in the arm-hole of his waistcoat and the other holding his claque.

"By Jupiter, it's Mirobolant!" cried Strong, bursting out laughing. "*Bon jour, Chef! — Bon jour, Chevalier!*"

"*De la croix de Juillet, Chevalier!*" said the Chef, laying his hand on his decoration.

"By Jove, here's some more ribbon!" said Pen, amused.

A man with very black hair and whiskers, dyed evidently with the purple of Tyre, with twinkling eyes and white eyelashes, and a thousand wrinkles in his face, which was of a strange red colour, with two under-vests, and large gloves and hands, and a profusion of diamonds and jewels in his waistcoat and stock, with coarse feet crumpled into immense shiny boots, and a piece of particoloured ribbon in his button-hole, here came up and nodded familiarly to the Chevalier.

The Chevalier shook hands. "My friend Mr. Pendennis," Strong said. "Colonel Altamont, of the body-guard of his Highness the Nawaub of Lucknow." That officer bowed to the salute of Pen; who was now looking out eagerly to see if the person he wanted had entered the room.

Not yet. But the band began presently performing "See the Conquering Hero comes," and a host of fashionables — Dowager Countess of Rockminster, Mr. Pynsent and Miss Bell, Sir Francis Clavering, Bart., of Clavering Park, Lady Clavering and Miss Amory, Sir Horace Foggy, Bart., Lady Foggy, Colonel and Mrs. Higgs, — Wagg, Esq., (as the county paper afterwards described them), entered the room.

Pen rushed by Blanche, ran up to Laura, and seized her hand. "God bless you!" he said, "I want to speak to you — I must speak to you — Let me dance with you." "Not for three dances, dear Pen," she said, smiling: and he fell back, biting his nails with vexation, and forgetting to salute Pynsent.

After Lady Rockminster's party, Lady Clavering's followed in the procession.

Colonel Altamont eyed it hard, holding a most musky pocket-handkerchief up to his face, and bursting with laughter behind it.

"Who 's the gal in green along with 'm, Cap'n?" he asked of Strong.

"That 's Miss Amory, Lady Clavering's daughter," replied the Chevalier.

The Colonel could hardly contain himself for laughing.

CHAPTER V.

Contains some ball-practising.

UNDER some calico draperies in the shady embrasure of a window, Arthur Pendennis chose to assume a very gloomy and frowning countenance, and to watch Miss Bell dance her first quadrille with Mr. Pynsent for a partner. That gentleman was as solemn and severe as Englishmen are upon such occasions, and walked through the dance as he would have walked up to his pew in church, without a smile upon his face, or allowing any outward circumstance to interfere with his attention to the grave duty in which he was engaged. But Miss Laura's face was beaming with pleasure and good-nature. The lights and the crowd and music excited her. As she spread out her white robes, and performed her part of the dance, smiling and happy, her brown ringlets flowing back over her fair shoulders from her honest rosy face, more than one gentleman in the room admired and looked after her; and Lady Fogey, who had a house in London and gave herself no small airs of fashion when in the country, asked of Lady Rockminster who the young person was, mentioned a reigning beauty in London whom, in her ladyship's opinion, Laura was rather like, and pronounced that she would "do."

Lady Rockminster would have been very much surprised if any *protégée* of her's would not "do," and wondered at Lady Fogey's impudence in judging upon the point at all. She surveyed Laura with majestic glances through her eye-glass. She was pleased with the girl's artless looks, and gay innocent manner. Her manner is very good; her ladyship thought. Her arms are rather red, but that is a defect of her youth. Her ton is far better than that of the little pert Miss Amory, who is dancing opposite to her.

Miss Blanche was, indeed, the *vis-à-vis* of Miss Laura, and smiled most killingly upon her dearest friend, and nodded to her, and talked to her, when they met during the quadrille evolutions, and patronised her a great deal. Her shoulders were the whitest in the whole room: and they were never easy in her frock for one single instant: nor were her eyes, which rolled about incessantly: nor was her little figure:—it seemed to say to all the people, "Come and look at me — not at that pink, healthy, bouncing country lass, Miss Bell, who scarcely knew how to dance till I taught her. This is the true Parisian manner — this is the prettiest little foot in the room, and the prettiest little chaussure, too. Look at it, Mr. Pynsent. Look at it, Mr. Pendennis, you who are scowling behind the curtain — I know you are longing to dance with me."

Laura went on dancing, and keeping an attentive eye upon Mr. Pen in the embrasure of the window. He did not quit that retirement during the first quadrille, nor until the second, when then good-natured Lady Clavering beckoned to him to come up to her to the dais or place of honour where the dowagers were, and whither Pen went blushing and exceedingly awkward, as most conceited young fellows are. He performed a haughty salutation to Lady Rockminster, who hardly acknowledged his bow, and then went and paid his respects to the widow of the late Amory, who was splendid in diamonds,

velvet, lace, feathers, and all sorts of millinery and goldsmith's ware.

Young Mr. Fogey, then in the fifth form at Eton, and ardently expecting his beard and his commission in a dragoon regiment, was the second partner who was honoured with Miss Bell's hand. He was rapt in admiration of that young lady. He thought he had never seen so charming a creature. "I like you much better than the French girl," (for this young gentleman had been dancing with Miss Amory before) he candidly said to her. Laura laughed, and looked more good-humoured than ever; and in the midst of her laughter caught a sight of Pen, and continued to laugh as he, on his side, continued to look absurdly pompous and sulky. The next dance was a waltz, and young Fogey thought, with a sigh, that he did not know how to waltz, and vowed he would have a master the next holidays.

Mr. Pynsent again claimed Miss Bell's hand for this dance; and Pen beheld her in a fury, twirling round the room, her waist encircled by the arm of that gentleman. He never used to be angry before when, on summer evenings, the chairs and tables being removed, and the governess called down stairs to play the piano, he and the Chevalier Strong, (who was a splendid performer, and could dance a British hornpipe, a German waltz, or a Spanish fandango, if need were), and the two young ladies, Blanche and Laura, improvised little balls at Clavering Park. Laura enjoyed this dancing so much, and was so animated, that she even animated Mr. Pynsent. Blanche, who could dance beautifully, had an unlucky partner, Captain Broadfoot, of the Dragoons, then stationed at Chatteries. For Captain Broadfoot, though devoting himself with great energy to the object in view, could not get round in time: and, not having the least ear for music, was unaware that his movements were too slow.

So, in the waltz as in the quadrille, Miss Blanche saw that her dear friend Laura had the honours of the dance, and was by no means pleased with the latter's success. After a couple of turns with the heavy dragoon, she pleaded fatigue, and requested to be led back to her place, near her mamma, to whom Pen was talking; and she asked him why he had not asked her to waltz, and had left her to the mercies of that great odious man in spurs and a red coat?

"I thought spurs and scarlet were the most fascinating objects in the world to young ladies," Pen answered. "I never should have dared to put my black coat in competition with that splendid red jacket."

"You are very unkind and cruel and sulky and naughty," said Miss Amory, with another shrug of the shoulders. "You had better go away. Your cousin is looking at us over Mr. Pynsent's shoulder."

"Will you waltz with me?" said Pen.

"Not this waltz. I can't, having just sent away that great hot Captain Broadfoot. Look at Mr. Pynsent, did you ever see such a creature? But I will dance the next waltz with you, and the quadrille too. I am promised, but I will tell Mr. Poole that I had forgotten my engagement to you."

"Women forget very readily," Pendennis said.

"But they always come back, and are very repentant and sorry for what they've done," Blanche said. "See, here comes the Poker, and dear Laura leaning on him. How pretty she looks!"

Laura came up, and put out her hand to Pen, to whom Pynsent made a sort of bow, appearing to be not much more graceful than that domestic instrument to which Miss Amory compared him.

But Laura's face was full of kindness. "I am so glad you have come, dear Pen," she said. "I can speak to you now.

How is mamma? The three dances are over, and I am engaged to you for the next, Pen."

"I have just engaged myself to Miss Amory," said Pen; and Miss Amory nodded her head, and made her usual little curtsy. "I don't intend to give him up, dearest Laura," she said.

"Well, then, he'll waltz with me, dear Blanche," said the other. "Won't you, Pen?"

"I promised to waltz with Miss Amory."

"Provoking!" said Laura, and making a curtsy in her turn, she went and placed herself under the ample wing of Lady Rockminster.

Pen was delighted with his mischief. The two prettiest girls in the room were quarrelling about him. He flattered himself he had punished Miss Laura. He leaned in a dandified air, with his elbow over the wall, and talked to Blanche: he quizzed unmercifully all the men in the room — the heavy dragoons in their tight jackets — the country dandies in their queer attire — the strange toilettes of the ladies. One seemed to have a bird's nest in her head; another had six pounds of grapes in her hair, besides her false pearls. "It's a *coiffure* of almonds and raisins," said Pen, "and might be served up for dessert." In a word, he was exceedingly satirical and amusing.

During the quadrille he carried on this kind of conversation with unflinching bitterness and vivacity, and kept Blanche continually laughing, both at his wickedness and jokes, which were good, and also because Laura was again their *vis-à-vis*, and could see and hear how merry and confidential they were.

"Arthur is charming to-night," she whispered to Laura, across Cornet Perch's shell jacket, as Pen was performing *cavalier seul* before them, drawling through that figure with a thumb in the pocket of each waistcoat.

"Who?" said Laura.

"Arthur," answered Blanche, in French. "Oh, it's such a pretty name!" And now the young ladies went over to Pen's side, and Cornet Perch performed a *pas seul* in his turn. He had no waistcoat pocket to put his hands into, and they looked large and swollen as they hung before him depending from the tight arms in the jacket.

During the interval between the quadrille and the succeeding waltz, Pen did not take any notice of Laura, except to ask her whether her partner, Cornet Perch, was an amusing youth, and whether she liked him so well as her other partner, Mr. Pynsent. Having planted which two daggers in Laura's gentle bosom, Mr. Pendennis proceeded to rattle on with Blanche Amory, and to make jokes good or bad, but which were always loud. Laura was at a loss to account for her cousin's sulky behaviour, and ignorant in what she had offended him; however, she was not angry in her turn at Pen's splenetic mood, for she was the most good-natured and forgiving of women, and besides, an exhibition of jealousy on a man's part is not always disagreeable to a lady.

As Pen would not dance with her, she was glad to take up with the active Chevalier Strong, who was a still better performer than Pen; and being very fond of dancing, as every brisk and innocent young girl should be, when the waltz music began she set off, and chose to enjoy herself with all her heart. Captain Broadfoot on this occasion occupied the floor in conjunction with a lady of proportions scarcely inferior to his own; Miss Roundle, a large young woman in a strawberry-ice coloured crape dress, the daughter of the lady with the grapes in her head, whose bunches Pen had admired.

And now taking his time, and with his fair partner Blanche hanging lovingly on the arm which encircled her, Mr. Arthur Pendennis set out upon his waltzing career, and felt, as he

whirled round to the music, that he and Blanche were performing very brilliantly indeed. Very likely he looked to see if Miss Bell thought so too; but she did not or would not see him, and was always engaged with her partner Captain Strong. But Pen's triumph was not destined to last long; and it was doomed that poor Blanche was to have yet another discomfiture on that unfortunate night. While she and Pen were whirling round as light and brisk as a couple of operadancers, honest Captain Broadfoot and the lady round whose large waist he was clinging, were twisting round very leisurely according to their natures, and indeed were in everybody's way. But they were more in Pendennis's way than in anybody's else, for he and Blanche, whilst executing their rapid gyrations, came bolt up against the heavy dragoon and his lady, and with such force that the centre of gravity was lost by all four of the circumvolving bodies; Captain Broadfoot and Miss Roundle were fairly upset, as was Pen himself, who was less lucky than his partner Miss Amory, who was only thrown upon a bench against a wall.

But Pendennis came fairly down upon the floor, sprawling in the general ruin with Broadfoot and Miss Roundle. The Captain, though heavy, was good-natured, and was the first to burst out into a loud laugh at his own misfortune, which nobody therefore heeded. But Miss Amory was savage at her mishap; Miss Roundle placed on her *séant*, and looking pitifully round, presented an object which very few people could see without laughing; and Pen was furious when he heard the people giggling about him. He was one of those sarcastic young fellows that did not bear a laugh at his own expense, and of all things in the world feared ridicule most.

As he got up Laura and Strong were laughing at him; everybody was laughing; Pynsent and his partner were laughing; and Pen boiled with wrath against the pair, and

could have stabbed them both on the spot. He turned away in a fury from them, and began blundering out apologies to Miss Amory. It was the other couple's fault — the woman in pink had done it — Pen hoped Miss Amory was not hurt — would she not have the courage to take another turn?

Miss Amory in a pet said she *was* very much hurt indeed, and she would not take another turn; and she accepted with great thanks a glass of water which a cavalier, who wore a blue ribbon and a three-pointed star, rushed to fetch for her when he had seen the deplorable accident. She drank the water, smiled upon the bringer gracefully, and turning her white shoulder at Mr. Pen in the most marked and haughty manner, besought the gentleman with the star to conduct her to her mamma; and she held out her hand in order to take his arm.

The man with the star trembled with delight at this mark of her favour; he bowed over her hand, pressed it to his coat fervidly, and looked round him with triumph.

It was no other than the happy Mirobolant whom Blanche had selected as an escort. But the truth is, that the young lady had never fairly looked in the artist's face since he had been employed in her mother's family, and had no idea but it was a foreign nobleman on whose arm she was leaning. As she went off, Pen forgot his humiliation in his surprise, and cried out, "By Jove, it's the cook!"

The instant he had uttered the words, he was sorry for having spoken them — for it was Blanche who had herself invited Mirobolant to escort her, nor could the artist do otherwise than comply with a lady's command. Blanche in her flutter did not hear what Arthur said; but Mirobolant heard him, and cast a furious glance at him over his shoulder, which rather amused Mr. Pen. He was in a mischievous and sulky humour; wanting perhaps to pick a quarrel with

somebody; but the idea of having insulted a cook, or that such an individual should have any feeling of honour at all, did not much enter into the mind of this lofty young aristocrat, the apothecary's son.

It had never entered that poor artist's head, that he as a man was not equal to any other mortal, or that there was anything in his position so degrading as to prevent him from giving his arm to a lady who asked for it. He had seen in the fêtes in his own country fine ladies, not certainly demoiselles (but the demoiselle Anglaise he knew was a great deal more free than the spinster in France) join in the dance with Blaise or Pierre; and he would have taken Blanche up to Lady Clavering, and possibly have asked her to dance too, but he heard Pen's exclamation, which struck him as if it had shot him, and cruelly humiliated and angered him. She did not know what caused him to start, and to grind a Gascon oath between his teeth.

But Strong, who was acquainted with the poor fellow's state of mind, having had the interesting information from our friend Madame Fribsby, was luckily in the way when wanted, and saying something rapidly in Spanish, which the other understood, the Chevalier begged Miss Amory to come and take an ice before she went back to Lady Clavering. Upon which the unhappy Mirobolant relinquished the arm which he had held for a minute, and with a most profound and piteous bow, fell back. "Don't you know who it is?" Strong asked of Miss Amory, as he led her away. "It is the chef Mirobolant."

"How should I know?" asked Blanche. "He has a *croix*; he is very *distingué*; he has beautiful eyes."

"The poor fellow is mad for your *beaux yeux*, I believe," Strong said. "He is a very good cook, but he is not quite right in the head."

"What did you say to him in the unknown tongue?" asked Miss Blanche.

"He is a Gascon, and comes from the borders of Spain," Strong answered. "I told him he would lose his place if he walked with you."

"Poor Monsieur Mirobolant!" said Blanche.

"Did you see the look he gave Pendennis?" — Strong asked, enjoying the idea of the mischief — "I think he would like to run little Pen through with one of his spits."

"He is an odious, conceited, clumsy creature, that Mr. Pen," said Blanche.

"Broadfoot looked as if he would like to kill him too, so did Pynsent," Strong said. "What ice will you have — water ice or cream ice?"

"Water ice. Who is that odd man staring at me — he is *decoré* too."

"That is my friend Colonel Altamont, a very queer character, in the service of the Nawaub of Lucknow. Hallo! what 's that noise! I'll be back in an instant," said the Chevalier, and sprang out of the room to the ball-room, where a *souffle* and a noise of high voices was heard.

The refreshment-room, in which Miss Amory now found herself, was a room set apart for the purposes of supper, which Mr. Rincer the landlord had provided for those who chose to partake, at the rate of five shillings per head. Also, refreshments of a superior class were here ready for the ladies and gentlemen of the county families who came to the ball; but the commoner sort of persons were kept out of the room by a waiter who stood at the portal, and who said that was a select room for Lady Clavering and Lady Rockminster's parties, and not to be opened to the public till supper-time, which was not to be until past midnight. Pynsent, who danced with his constituents' daughters, took them and their mammas in for

their refreshment there. Strong, who was manager and master of the revels wherever he went, had of course the *entrée* — and the only person who was now occupying the room, was the gentleman with the black wig and the orders in his button-hole; the officer in the service of his Highness the Nawaub of Lucknow.

This gentleman had established himself very early in the evening in this apartment, where, saying he was confoundedly thirsty, he called for a bottle of champagne. At this order, the waiter instantly supposed that he had to do with a grandee, and the Colonel sate down and began to eat his supper and absorb his drink, and enter affably into conversation with anybody who entered the room.

Sir Francis Clavering and Mr. Waggon found him there; when they left the ball-room, which they did pretty early — Sir Francis to go and smoke a cigar, and look at the people gathered outside the ball-room on the shore, which he declared was much better fun than to remain within; Mr. Waggon to hang on to a Baronet's arm, as he was always pleased to do on the arm of the greatest man in the company. Colonel Altamont had stared at these gentlemen in so odd a manner, as they passed through the "Select" room, that Clavering made inquiries of the landlord who he was, and hinted a strong opinion that the officer of the Nawaub's service was drunk.

Mr. Pynsent, too, had had the honour of a conversation with the servant of the Indian potentate. It was Pynsent's cue to speak to everybody; (which he did, to do him justice, in the most ungracious manner;) and he took the gentleman in the black wig for some constituent, some merchant captain, or other outlandish man of the place. Mr. Pynsent, then, coming into the refreshment-room with a lady, the wife of a constituent, on his arm, the Colonel asked him if he would try a glass of Sham? Pynsent took it with great gravity, bowed,

tasted the wine, and pronounced it excellent, and with the utmost politeness retreated before Colonel Altamont. This gravity and decorum routed and surprised the Colonel more than any other kind of behaviour probably would: he stared after Pynsent stupidly, and pronounced to the landlord over the counter that he was a rum one. Mr. Rincer blushed, and hardly knew what to say. Mr. Pynsent was a county Earl's grandson, going to set up as a Parliament man. Colonel Altamont, on the other hand, wore orders and diamonds, jingled sovereigns constantly in his pocket, and paid his way like a man; so not knowing what to say, Mr. Rincer said, "Yes, Colonel — yes, Ma'am, did you say tea? Cup a tea for Mr. Jones, Mrs. R.," and so got off that discussion regarding Mr. Pynsent's qualities, into which the Nizam's officer appeared inclined to enter.

In fact, if the truth must be told, Mr. Altamont, having remained at the buffet almost all night, and employed himself very actively whilst there, had considerably flushed his brain by drinking, and he was still going on drinking, when Mr. Strong and Miss Amory entered the room.

When the Chevalier ran out of the apartment, attracted by the noise in the dancing-room, the Colonel rose from his chair with his little red eyes glowing like coals, and, with rather an unsteady gait, advanced towards Blanche, who was sipping her ice. She was absorbed in absorbing it, for it was very fresh and good; or she was not curious to know what was going on in the adjoining room, although the waiters were, who ran after Chevalier Strong. So that when she looked up from her glass, she beheld this strange man staring at her out of his little red eyes. "Who was he? It was quite exciting."

"And so you're Betsy Amory," said he, after gazing at her. "Betsy Amory, by Jove!"

"Who — who speaks to me?" said Betsy, alias Blanche,

But the noise in the ball-room is really becoming so loud, that we must rush back thither, and see what is the cause of the disturbance.

CHAPTER VI.

Which is both quarrelsome and sentimental.

CIVIL war was raging, high words passing, people pushing and squeezing together in an unseemly manner, round a window in the corner of the ball-room, close by the door through which the Chevalier Strong shouldered his way. Through the opened window, the crowd in the street below was sending up sarcastic remarks, such as "Pitch into him!" "Where's the police?" and the like; and a ring of individuals, amongst whom Madame Fribsby was conspicuous, was gathered round Monsieur Alcide Mirobolant on the one side; whilst several gentlemen and ladies surrounded our friend Arthur Pendennis on the other. Strong penetrated into this assembly, elbowing by Madame Fribsby, who was charmed at the Chevalier's appearance, and cried, "Save him, save him!" in frantic and pathetic accents.

The cause of the disturbance, it appeared, was the angry little chef of Sir Francis Clavering's culinary establishment. Shortly after Strong had quitted the room, and whilst Mr. Pen, greatly irate at his downfall in the waltz, which had made him look ridiculous in the eyes of the nation, and by Miss Amory's behaviour to him, which had still further insulted his dignity, was endeavouring to get some coolness of body and temper, by looking out of window towards the sea, which was sparkling in the distance, and murmuring in a wonderful calm — whilst he was really trying to compose himself, and owning to himself, perhaps, that he had acted in a very

absurd and peevish manner during the night — he felt a hand upon his shoulder; and, on looking round, beheld, to his utter surprise and horror, that the hand in question belonged to Monsieur Mirobolant, whose eyes were glaring out of his pale face and ringlets at Mr. Pen. To be tapped on the shoulder by a French cook was a piece of familiarity which made the blood of the Pendennises to boil up in the veins of their descendant, and he was astounded, almost more than enraged, at such an indignity.

"You speak French?" Mirobolant said in his own language, to Pen.

"What is that to you, pray?" said Pen, in English.

"At any rate, you understand it?" continued the other, with a bow.

"Yes, Sir," said Pen, with a stamp of his foot; "I understand it pretty well."

"Vous me comprendrez alors, Monsieur Pendennis," replied the other, rolling out his *r* with Gascon force, "*quand je vous dis que vous êtes un lâche. Monsieur Pendennis — un lâche, entendez-vous?*"

"What?" said Pen, starting round on him.

"You understand the meaning of the word and its consequences among men of honour?" the artist said, putting his hand on his hip, and staring at Pen.

"The consequences are, that I will fling you out of window, you — impudent scoundrel," bawled out Mr. Pen; and darting upon the Frenchman, he would very likely have put his threat into execution, for the window was at hand, and the artist by no means a match for the young gentleman — had not Captain Broadfoot and another heavy officer flung themselves between the combatants, — had not the ladies begun to scream, — had not the fiddles stopped, — had not the crowd of people come running in that direction, — had not Laura, with a face of

great alarm, looked over their heads and asked for Heaven's sake what was wrong, — had not the opportune Strong made his appearance from the refreshment-room, and found Alcides grinding his teeth and jabbering oaths in his Gascon French, and Pen looking uncommonly wicked, although trying to appear as calm as possible, when the ladies and the crowd came up.

"What has happened?" Strong asked of the chef, in Spanish.

"I am Chevalier de Juillet," said the other, slapping his breast, "and he has insulted me."

"What has he said to you?" asked Strong.

"Il m'a appelé — *Cuisinier*," hissed out the little Frenchman.

Strong could hardly help laughing. "Come away with me, my poor Chevalier," he said. "We must not quarrel before ladies. Come away; I will carry your message to Mr. Pen-dennis. — The poor fellow is not right in his head," he whispered to one or two people about him; — and others, and anxious Laura's face visible amongst these, gathered round Pen and asked the cause of the disturbance.

Pen did not know. "The man was going to give his arm to a young lady, on which I said that he was a cook, and the man called me a coward and challenged me to fight. I own I was so surprised and indignant, that if you gentlemen had not stopped me, I should have thrown him out of window," Pen said.

"D— him, serve him right, too, — the d— impudent foreign scoundrel," the gentlemen said.

"I — I'm very sorry if I hurt his feelings, though," Pen added: and Laura was glad to hear him say that; although some of the young bucks said, "No, hang the fellow. — hang those impudent foreigners — little thrashing would do them good."

"You will go and shake hands with him before you go to sleep — won't you, Pen?" said Laura, coming up to him. "Foreigners may be more susceptible than we are, and have different manners. If you hurt a poor man's feelings, I am sure you would be the first to ask his pardon. Wouldn't you, dear Pen?"

She looked all forgiveness and gentleness, like an angel, as she spoke; and Pen took both her hands, and looked into her kind face, and said indeed he would.

"How fond that girl is of me!" He thought, as she stood gazing at him. "Shall I speak to her now? No — not now. I must have this absurd business with the Frenchman over."

Laura asked — Wouldn't he stop and dance with her? She was as anxious to keep him in the room, as he to quit it. "Won't you stop and waltz with me, Pen? I'm not afraid to waltz with you."

This was an affectionate, but an unlucky speech. Pen saw himself prostrate on the ground, having tumbled over Miss Roundle and the dragoon, and flung Blanche up against the wall — saw himself on the ground, and all the people laughing at him, Laura and Pynsent amongst them.

"I shall never dance again," he replied, with a dark and determined face. "Never. I'm surprised you should ask me."

"Is it because you can't get Blanche for a partner?" asked Laura, with a wicked, unlucky captiousness.

"Because I don't wish to make a fool of myself, for other people to laugh at me," Pen answered — "for *you* to laugh at me, Laura. I saw you and Pynsent. By Jove! no man shall laugh at me."

"Pen, Pen, don't be so wicked!" cried out the poor girl, hurt at the morbid perverseness and savage vanity of Pen. He was glaring round in the direction of Mr. Pynsent as if he

would have liked to engage that gentleman as he had done the cook. "Who thinks the worse of you for stumbling in a waltz?" If Laura does, we don't. "Why are you so sensitive, and ready to think evil?"

Here again, by ill luck, Mr. Pynsent came up to Laura, and said, "I have it in command from Lady Rockminster to ask whether I may take you in to supper?"

"I — I was going in with my cousin," Laura said.

"O — pray, no!" said Pen. "You are in such good hands, that I can't do better than leave you: and I'm going home." *Allahabad Christian College*

"Good night, Mr. Pendennis," Pynsent said, drily — to which speech (which, in fact, meant, "Go to the deuce for an insolent, jealous, impertinent jackanapes, whose ears I should like to box") Mr. Pendennis did not vouchsafe any reply, except a bow: and, in spite of Laura's imploring looks, he left the room.

"How beautifully calm and bright the night outside is!" said Mr. Pynsent; "and what a murmur the sea is making! It would be pleasanter to be walking on the beach, than in this hot room."

"Very," said Laura.

"What a strange congregation of people," continued Pynsent. "I have had to go up and perform the agreeable to most of them — the attorney's daughters — the apothecary's wife — I scarcely know whom. There was a man in the refreshment-room, who insisted upon treating me to champagne — a seafaring looking man — extraordinarily dressed, and seeming half tipsy. As a public man, one is bound to conciliate all these people, but it is a hard task — especially when one would so very much like to be elsewhere" — and he blushed rather as he spoke.

"I beg your pardon," said Laura — "I — I was not listening. Indeed — I was frightened about that quarrel between my cousin and that — that — French person."

"Your cousin has been rather unlucky to-night," Pynsent said. "There are three or four persons whom he has not succeeded in pleasing — Captain Broadwood; what is his name — the officer — and the young lady in red with whom he danced — and Miss Blanche — and the poor chef — and I don't think he seemed to be particularly pleased with me."

"Didn't he leave me in charge to you?" Laura said, looking up into Mr. Pynsent's face, and dropping her eyes instantly, like a guilty little story-telling coquette.

"Indeed, I can forgive him a good deal for that," Pynsent eagerly cried out, and she took his arm, and he led off his little prize in the direction of the supper-room.

She had no great desire for that repast, though it was served in Rimer's well-known style, as the county paper said, giving an account of the entertainment afterwards; indeed, she was very *distracted*; and exceedingly pained and unhappy about Pen. Captious and quarrelsome; jealous and selfish; fickle and violent and unjust when his anger led him astray; how could her mother (as indeed Helen had by a thousand words and hints) ask her to give her heart to such a man? and suppose she were to do so, would it make him happy?

But she got some relief at length, when, at the end of half-an-hour — a long half-hour it had seemed to her — a waiter brought her a little note in pencil from Pen, who said, "I met Cooky below ready to fight me; and I asked his pardon. I'm glad I did it. I wanted to speak to you to-night, but will keep what I had to say till you come home. God bless you. Dance away all night with Pynsent, and be very happy. PEN." — Laura was very thankful for this letter, and to think that there was goodness and forgiveness still in her mother's boy.

Pen went down stairs, his heart reproaching him for his absurd behaviour to Laura, whose gentle and imploring looks followed and rebuked him; and he was scarcely out of the ball-room door but he longed to turn back and ask her pardon. But he remembered that he had left her with that confounded Pynsent. He could not apologise before *him*. He would compromise and forget his wrath, and make his peace with the Frenchman.

The Chevalier was pacing down below in the hall of the inn when Pen descended from the ball-room; and he came up to Pen, with all sorts of fun and mischief lighting up his jolly face.

"I have got him in the coffee-room," he said, "with a brace of pistols and a candle. Or would you like swords on the beach? Mirobolant is a dead hand with the foils, and killed four *gardes-du-corps* with his own point in the barricades of July."

"Confound it," said Pen, in a fury, "I can't fight a cook!"

"He is a Chevalier of July," replied the other. "They present arms to him in his own country."

"And do you ask me, Captain Strong, to go out with a servant?" Pen asked fiercely; "I'll call a policeman for *him*; but — but —"

"You'll invite me to hair triggers?" cried Strong, with a laugh. "Thank you for nothing; I was but joking. I came to settle quarrels, not to fight them. I have been soothing down Mirobolant; I have told him that you did not apply the word 'Cook' to him in an offensive sense: that it was contrary to all the customs of the country that a hired officer of a household, as I called it, should give his arm to the daughter of the house." And then he told Pen the grand secret which

he had had from Madame Fribsby of the violent passion under which the poor artist was labouring.

When Arthur heard this tale, he broke out into a hearty laugh, in which Strong joined, and his rage against the poor cook vanished at once. He had been absurdly jealous himself all the evening, and had longed for a pretext to insult Pynsent. He remembered how jealous he had been of Oaks in his first affair; he was ready to pardon anything to a man under a passion like that: and he went into the coffee-room where Mirobolant was waiting, with an outstretched hand, and made him a speech in French, in which he declared that he was "Sincèrement fâché d'avoir usé une expression qui avoit pu blesser Monsieur Mirobolant, et qu'il donnoit sa parole comme un gentilhomme qu'il ne l'avoit jamais, jamais — intendé," said Pen, who made a shot at a French word for "intended," and was secretly much pleased with his own fluency and correctness in speaking that language.

"Bravo, bravo!" cried Strong, as much amused with Pen's speech as pleased by his kind manner. And the Chevalier Mirobolant of course withdraws, and sincerely regrets the expression of which he made use.

"Monsieur Pendennis has disproved my words himself," said Alcide with great politeness; "he has shown that he is a *galant homme*."

And so they shook hands and parted, Arthur in the first place dispatching his note to Laura before he and Strong committed themselves to the Butcher-boy.

As they drove along, Strong complimented Pen upon his behaviour, as well as upon his skill in French. "You're a good fellow, Pendennis, and you speak French like Chateaubriand, by Jove."

"I've been accustomed to it from my youth upwards," said Pen; and Strong had the grace not to laugh for five

minutes, when he exploded into fits of hilarity which Penderennis has never, perhaps, understood up to this day.

It was daybreak when they got to the Brawl, where they separated. By that time the ball at Baymouth was over too. Madame Fribsby and Mirobolant were on their way home in the Clavering fly; Laura was in bed with an easy heart and asleep at Lady Rockminster's; and the Claverings at rest at the inn at Baymouth, where they had quarters for the night. A short time after the disturbance between Pen and the chef, Blanche had come out of the refreshment-room, looking as pale as a lemon-ice. She told her maid, having no other *confidante* at hand, that she had met with the most romantic adventure — the most singular man — one who had known the author of her being — her persecuted — her unhappy — her heroic — her murdered father; and she began a sonnet to his manes before she went to sleep.

So Pen returned to Fairoaks, in company with his friend the Chevalier, without having uttered a word of the message which he had been so anxious to deliver to Laura at Baymouth. He could wait, however, until her return home, which was to take place on the succeeding day. He was not seriously jealous of the progress made by Mr. Pynsent in her favour; and he felt pretty certain that in this, as in any other family arrangement, he had but to ask and have, and Laura, like his mother, could refuse him nothing.

When Helen's anxious looks inquired of him what had happened at Baymouth, and whether her darling project was fulfilled, Pen, in a gay tone, told of the calamity which had befallen; laughingly said, that no man could think about declarations under such a mishap, and made light of the matter. "There will be plenty of time for sentiment, dear mother, when Laura comes back," he said, and he looked in

the glass with a killing air, and his mother put his hair off his forehead and kissed him, and of course thought, for her part, that no woman could resist him: and was exceedingly happy that day.

When he was not with her, Mr. Pen occupied himself in packing books and portmanteaus, burning and arranging papers, cleaning his gun and putting it into its case: in fact, in making dispositions for departure. For though he was ready to marry, this gentleman was eager to go to London too, rightly considering that at three-and-twenty it was quite time for him to begin upon the serious business of life, and to set about making a fortune as quickly as possible.

The means to this end he had already shaped out for himself. "I shall take chambers," he said, "and enter myself at an Inn of Court. With a couple of hundred pounds I shall be able to carry through the first year very well; after that I have little doubt my pen will support me, as it is doing with several Oxbridge men now in town. I have a tragedy, a comedy, and a novel, all nearly finished, and for which I can't fail to get a price. And so I shall be able to live pretty well, without drawing upon my poor mother, until I have made my way at the bar. Then, some day I will come back and make her dear soul happy by marrying Laura. She is as good and as sweet-tempered a girl as ever lived, besides being really very good-looking, and the engagement will serve to steady me, — won't it, Ponto?" Thus, smoking his pipe, and talking to his dog as he sauntered through the gardens and orchards of the little domain of Fair Oaks, this young day-dreamer built castles in the air for himself: "Yes, she'll steady me, won't she? And you'll miss me when I've gone, won't you, old boy?" he asked of Ponto, who quivered his tail and thrust his brown nose into his master's fist. Ponto licked his hand

and shoe, as they all did in that house, and Mr. Pen received their homage as other folks do the flattery which they get.

Laura came home rather late in the evening of the second day; and Mr. Pynsent, as ill luck would have it, drove her from Clavering. The poor girl could not refuse his offer, but his appearance brought a dark cloud upon the brow of Arthur Pendennis. Laura saw this, and was pained by it: the eager widow, however, was aware of nothing, and being anxious, doubtless, that the delicate question should be asked at once, was for going to bed very soon after Laura's arrival, and rose for that purpose to leave the sofa where she now generally lay and where Laura would come and sit and work or read by her. But when Helen rose, Laura said, with a blush and rather an alarmed voice, that she was also very tired and wanted to go to bed: so that the widow was disappointed in her scheme for that night at least, and Mr. Pen was left another day in suspense regarding his fate.

His dignity was offended at being thus obliged to remain in the antechamber when he wanted an audience. Such a sultan as he, could not afford to be kept waiting. However he went to bed and slept upon his disappointment pretty comfortably, and did not wake until the early morning, when he looked up and saw his mother standing in his room.

"Dear Pen, rouse up," said this lady. "Do not be lazy. It is the most beautiful morning in the world. I have not been able to sleep since day-break; and Laura has been out for an hour. She is in the garden. Everybody ought to be in the garden and out on such a morning as this."

Pen laughed. He saw what thoughts were uppermost in the simple woman's heart. His good-natured laughter cheered the widow. "Oh you profound dissembler," he said, kissing his mother. "Oh you artful creature! Can nobody escape

from your wicked tricks? and will you make your only son your victim?" Helen too laughed, she blushed, she fluttered, and was agitated. She was as happy as she could be — a good tender, matchmaking woman, the dearest project of whose heart was about to be accomplished.

So, after exchanging some knowing looks and hasty words, Helen left Arthur; and this young hero, rising from his bed, proceeded to decorate his beautiful person, and shave his ambrosial chin; and in half-an-hour he issued out from his apartment into the garden in quest of Laura. His reflections as he made his toilette were rather dismal. "I am going to tie myself for life," he thought, "to please my mother. Laura is the best of women, and — and she has given me her money. I wish to Heaven I had not received it; I wish I had not this duty to perform just yet. But as both the women have set their hearts on the match, why I suppose I must satisfy them — and now for it. A man may do worse than make happy two of the best creatures in the world." So Pen, now he was actually come to the point, felt very grave, and by no means elated, and, indeed, thought it was a great sacrifice he was going to perform.

It was Miss Laura's custom, upon her garden excursions, to wear a sort of uniform, which, though homely, was thought by many people to be not unbecoming. She had a large straw hat, with a streamer of broad ribbon, which was useless probably, but the hat sufficiently protected the owner's pretty face from the sun. Over her accustomed gown she wore a blouse or pinafore, which, being fastened round her little waist by a smart belt, looked extremely well, and her hands were guaranteed from the thorns of her favourite rose-bushes by a pair of gauntlets, which gave this young lady a military and resolute air.

Somehow she had the very same smile with which she had laughed at him on the night previous, and the recollection of his disaster again offended Pen. But Laura, though she saw him coming down the walk looking so gloomy and full of care, accorded to him a smile of the most perfect and provoking good-humour, and went to meet him, holding one of the gauntlets to him, so that he might shake it if he liked — and Mr. Pen condescended to do so. His face, however, did not lose its tragic expression in consequence of this favour, and he continued to regard her with a dismal and solemn air.

"Excuse my glove," said Laura, with a laugh, pressing Pen's hand kindly with it. "We are not angry again, are we, Pen?"

"Why do you laugh at me?" said Pen. "You did the other night, and made a fool of me to the people at Baymouth."

"My dear Arthur, I meant you no wrong," the girl answered. "You and Miss Roundle looked so droll as you — as you met with your little accident, that I could not make a tragedy of it. Dear Pen, it wasn't a serious fall. And, besides, it was Miss Roundle who was the most unfortunate."

"Confound Miss Roundle," bellowed out Pen.

"I'm sure she looked so," said Laura, archly. "You were up in an instant; but that poor lady sitting on the ground in her red crape dress, and looking about her with that piteous face — can I ever forget her?" — and Laura began to make a face in imitation of Miss Roundle's under the disaster, but she checked herself repentantly, saying, "Well, we must not laugh at her, but I am sure we ought to laugh at you, Pen, if you were angry about such a trifle."

"You should not laugh at me, Laura," said Pen, with some bitterness; "not you, of all people."

"And why not? Are you such a great man?" asked Laura.

"Ah no, Laura, I'm such a poor one," Pen answered.

"Haven't you baited me enough already?"

"My dear Pen, and how?" cried Laura. "Indeed, indeed, I didn't think to vex you by such a trifle. I thought such a clever man as you could bear a harmless little joke from his sister," she said, holding her hand out again. "Dear Arthur, if I have hurt you, I beg your pardon."

"It is your kindness that humiliates me more even than your laughter, Laura," Pen said. "You are always my superior."

"What! superior to the great Arthur Pendennis? How can it be possible?" said Miss Laura, who may have had a little wickedness as well as a great deal of kindness in her composition. "You can't mean that any woman is your equal?"

"Those who confer benefits should not sneer," said Pen. "I don't like my benefactor to laugh at me, Laura; it makes the obligation very hard to bear. You scorn me because I have taken your money, and I am worthy to be scorned; but the blow is hard coming from you."

"Money! Obligation! For shame, Pen; this is ungenerous," Laura said, flushing red. "May not our mother claim everything that belongs to us? Don't I owe her all my happiness in this world, Arthur? What matters a few paltry guineas, if we can set her tender heart at rest, and ease her mind regarding you? I would dig in the fields, I would go out and be a servant — I would die for her. You know I would," said Miss Laura, kindling up; "and you call this paltry money an obligation? Oh, Pen, it's cruel — it's unworthy of you to take it so! If my brother may not share with me my superfluity, who may? — Mine? — I tell you it was not mine; it was all mamma's to do with as she chose, and so is

everything I have," said Laura; "my life is hers." And the enthusiastic girl looked towards the windows of the widow's room, and blessed in her heart the kind creature within.

Helen was looking, unseen, out of that window towards which Laura's eyes and heart were turned as she spoke, and was watching her two children with the deepest interest and emotion, longing and hoping that the prayer of her life might be fulfilled; and if Laura had spoken as Helen hoped, who knows what temptations Arthur Pendennis might have been spared, or what different trials he would have had to undergo? He might have remained at Fair Oaks all his days, and died a country gentleman. But would he have escaped then? Temptation is an obsequious servant that has no objection to the country, and we know that it takes up its lodging in hermitages as well as in cities; and that in the most remote and inaccessible desert it keeps company with the fugitive solitary.

"Is your life my mother's," said Pen, beginning to tremble, and speak in a very agitated manner. "You know, Laura, what the great object of hers is?" And he took her hand once more.

"What, Arthur?" she said, dropping it, and looking at him, at the window again, and then dropping her eyes to the ground, so that they avoided Pen's gaze. She, too, trembled, for she felt that the crisis for which she had been secretly preparing was come.

"Our mother has one wish above all others in the world, Laura," Pen said; "and I think you know it. I own to you that she has spoken to me of it; and if you will fulfil it, dear sister, I am ready. I am but very young as yet; but I have had so many pains and disappointments, that I am old and weary. I think I have hardly got a heart to offer. Before I have almost begun the race in life, I am a tired man. My

career has been a failure; I have been protected by those whom I by right should have protected. I own that your nobleness and generosity, dear Laura, shame me, whilst they render me grateful. When I heard from our mother what you had done for me; that it was you who armed me and bade me go out for one struggle more; I longed to go and throw myself at your feet, and say, 'Laura, will you come and share the contest with me? Your sympathy will cheer me while it lasts. I shall have one of the tenderest and most generous creatures under heaven to aid and bear me company.' Will you take me, dear Laura, and make our mother happy?"

"Do you think mamma would be happy if you were otherwise, Arthur?" Laura said in a low sad voice.

"And why should I not be," asked Pen eagerly, "with so dear a creature as you by my side? I have not my first love to give you. I am a broken man. But indeed I would love you fondly and truly. I have lost many an illusion and ambition, but I am not without hope still. Talents I know I have, wretchedly as I have misapplied them: they may serve me yet: they would, had I a motive for action. Let me go away and think that I am pledged to return to you. Let me go and work, and hope that you will share my success if I gain it. You have given me so much, dear Laura, will you take from me nothing?"

"What have you got to give, Arthur?" Laura said, with a grave sadness of tone, which made Pen start, and see that his words had committed him. Indeed, his declaration had not been such as he would have made it two days earlier, when, full of hope and gratitude, he had run over to Laura, his liberatress, to thank her for his recovered freedom. Had he been permitted to speak then, he had spoken, and she, perhaps, had listened differently. It would have been a grateful heart asking for hers; not a weary one offered to her,

to take or to leave. Laura was offended with the terms in which Pen offered himself to her. He had, in fact, said that he had no love, and yet would take no denial. "I give myself to you to please my mother," he had said: "take me, as she wishes that I should make this sacrifice." The girl's spirit would brook a husband under no such conditions: she was not minded to run forward because Pen chose to hold out the handkerchief, and her tone, in reply to Arthur, showed her determination to be independent.

"No, Arthur," she said, "our marriage would not make mamma happy, as she fancies; for it would not content you very long. I, too, have known what her wishes were; for she is too open to conceal anything she has at heart: and once, perhaps, I thought — but that is over now — that I could have made you — that it might have been as she wished."

"You have seen somebody else," said Pen, angry at her tone, and recalling the incidents of the past days.

"That allusion might have been spared," Laura replied, flinging up her head. "A heart which has worn out love at three-and-twenty, as yours has, you say, should have survived jealousy too. I do not condescend to say whether I have seen or encouraged any other person. I shall neither admit the charge, nor deny it: and beg you also to allude to it no more."

"I ask your pardon, Laura, if I have offended you: but if I am jealous, does it not prove that I have a heart?"

"Not for me, Arthur. Perhaps you think you love me now: but it is only for an instant, and because you are foiled. Were there no obstacle, you would feel no ardour to overcome it. No, Arthur, you don't love me. You would weary of me in three months, as — as you do of most things; and mamma, seeing you tired of me, would be more unhappy than at my refusal to be yours. Let us be brother and sister, Arthur,

as heretofore — but no more. You will get over this little disappointment."

"I will try," said Arthur, in a great indignation.

"Have you not tried before?" Laura said, with some anger, for she had been angry with Arthur for a very long time, and was now determined, I suppose, to speak her mind. "And the next time, Arthur, when you offer yourself to a woman, do not say as you have done to me, 'I have no heart—I do not love you; but I am ready to marry you because my mother wishes for the match.' We require more than this in return for our love—that is, I think so. I have had no experience hitherto, and have not had the—the practice which you supposed me to have, when you spoke but now of my having seen somebody else. Did you tell your first love that you had no heart, Arthur? or your second that you did not love her, but that she might have you if she liked?"

"What—what do you mean?" asked Arthur, blushing, and still in great wrath.

"I mean Blanche Amory, Arthur Pendennis," Laura said, proudly. "It is but two months since you were sighing at her feet—making poems to her—placing them in hollow trees by the river-side. I knew all. I watched you—that is, she showed them to me. Neither one nor the other were in earnest perhaps; but it is too soon now, Arthur, to begin a new attachment. Go through the time of your—your widowhood at least, and do not think of marrying until you are out of mourning."—(Here the girl's eyes filled with tears, and she passed her hand across them.) "I am angry and hurt, and I have no right to be so, and I ask your pardon in my turn now, dear Arthur. You had a right to love Blanche. She was a thousand times prettier and more accomplished than—than any girl near us here; and you could not know that she had no heart; and so you were right to leave her too. I ought not

to rebuke you about Blanche Amory, and because she deceived you. Pardon me, Pen," — and she held the kind hand out to Pen once more.

"We were both jealous," said Pen. "Dear Laura, let us both forgive" — and he seized her hand and would have drawn her towards him. He thought that she was relenting, and already assumed the airs of a victor.

But she shrank back, and her tears passed away; and she fixed on him a look so melancholy and severe, that the young man in his turn shrank before it. "Do not mistake me, Arthur," she said, "it cannot be. You do not know what you ask, and do not be too angry with me for saying that I think you do not deserve it. What do you offer in exchange to a woman for her love, honour, and obedience? If ever I say these words, dear Pen, I hope to say them in earnest, and by the blessing of God to keep my vow. But you — what tie binds you? You do not care about many things which we poor women hold sacred. I do not like to think or ask how far your incredulity leads you. You offer to marry to please our mother, and own that you have no heart to give away? Oh, Arthur, what is it you offer me? What a rash compact would you enter into so lightly? A month ago, and you would have given yourself to another. I pray you do not trifle with your own or others' hearts so recklessly. Go and work; go and mend, dear Arthur, for I see your faults, and dare speak of them now: go and get fame, as you say that you can, and I will pray for my brother, and watch our dearest mother at home."

"Is that your final decision, Laura?" Arthur cried.

"Yes," said Laura, bowing her head; and once more giving him her hand, she went away. He saw her pass under the creepers of the little porch, and disappear into the house.

The curtains of his mother's window fell at the same minute, but he did not mark that, or suspect that Helen had been witnessing the scene.

Was he pleased, or was he angry at its termination? He had asked her, and a secret triumph filled his heart to think that he was still free. She had refused him, but did she not love him? That avowal of jealousy made him still think that her heart was his own, whatever her lips might utter.

And now we ought, perhaps, to describe another scene which took place at Fair Oaks, between the widow and Laura, when the latter had to tell Helen that she had refused Arthur Pendennis. Perhaps it was the hardest task of all which Laura had to go through in this matter: and the one which gave her the most pain. But as we do not like to see a good woman unjust, we shall not say a word more of the quarrel which now befel between Helen and her adopted daughter, or of the bitter tears which the poor girl was made to shed. It was the only difference which she and the widow had ever had as yet, and the more cruel from this cause. Pen left home whilst it was as yet pending — and Helen, who could pardon almost everything, could not pardon an act of justice in Laura.

CHAPTER VII.

Babylon.

OUR reader must now please to quit the woods and seashore of the west, and the gossip of Clavering, and the humdrum life of poor little Fairoaks, and transport himself with Arthur Pendennis, on the "Alacrity" coach, to London, whither he goes once for all to face the world and to make his fortune. As the coach whirls through the night away from the friendly gates of home, many a plan does the young man cast in his mind of future life and conduct, prudence, and peradventure success and fame. He knows he is a better man than many who have hitherto been ahead of him in the race: his first failure has caused him remorse, and brought with it reflection; it has not taken away his courage, or, let us add, his good opinion of himself. A hundred eager fancies and busy hopes keep him awake. How much older his mishaps and a year's thought and self-communion have made him, than when, twelve months since, he passed on this road on his way to and from Oxbridge! His thoughts turn in the night with inexpressible fondness and tenderness towards the fond mother, who blessed him when parting, and who, in spite of all his past faults and follies, trusts him and loves him still. Blessings be on her! he prays, as he looks up to the stars overhead. O Heaven, give him strength to work, to endure, to be honest, to avoid temptation, to be worthy of the loving soul who loves him so entirely! Very likely she is awake, too, at that moment, and sending up to the same Father purer prayers than his for the welfare of her boy. That woman's love is a talisman by which he holds and hopes to get his safety. And Laura's — he would have fain carried

her affection with him too, but she has denied it, as he is not worthy of it. He owns as much with shame and remorse; confesses how much better and loftier her nature is than his own — confesses it, and yet is glad to be free. "I am not good enough for such a creature," he owns to himself. He draws back before her spotless beauty and innocence, as from something that scares him. He feels he is not fit for such a mate as that; as many a wild prodigal who has been pious and guiltless in early days, keeps away from a church which he used to frequent once — shunning it, but not hostile to it — only feeling that he has no right in that pure place.

With these thoughts to occupy him, Pen did not fall asleep until the nipping dawn of an October morning, and woke considerably refreshed when the coach stopped at the old breakfasting place at B—, where he had had a score of merry meals on his way to and from school and college many times since he was a boy. As they left that place, the sun broke out brightly, the pace was rapid, the horn blew, the mile-stones flew by, Pen smoked and joked with guard and fellow-passengers and people along the familiar road; it grew more busy and animated at every instant; the last team of greys came out at H—, and the coach drove into London. What young fellow has not felt a thrill as he entered the vast place? Hundreds of other carriages, crowded with their thousands of men, were hastening to the great city. "Here is my place," thought Pen; "here is my battle beginning, in which I must fight and conquer, or fall. I have been a boy and a dawdler as yet. Oh, I long, I long to show that I can be a man." And from his place on the coach-roof the eager young fellow looked down upon the city, with the sort of longing desire which young soldiers feel on the eve of a campaign.

As they came along the road, Pen had formed acquaintance with a cheery fellow-passenger in a shabby cloak, who

talked a great deal about men of letters with whom he was very familiar, and who was, in fact, the reporter of a London newspaper, as whose representative he had been to attend a great wrestling-match in the west. This gentleman knew intimately, as it appeared, all the leading men of letters of his day, and talked about Tom Campbell, and Tom Hood, and Sydney Smith, and this and the other, as if he had been their most intimate friend. As they passed by Brompton, this gentleman pointed out to Pen Mr. Hurtle, the reviewer, walking with his umbrella. Pen craned over the coach to have a long look at the great Hurtle. He was a Boniface man, said Pen. And Mr. Doolan, of the Star newspaper (for such was the gentleman's name and address upon the card which he handed to Pen), said "Faith he was, and he knew him very well." Pen thought it was quite an honour to have seen the great Mr. Hurtle, whose works he admired. He believed fondly, as yet, in authors, reviewers, and editors of newspapers. Even Wagg, whose books did not appear to him to be masterpieces of human intellect, he yet secretly revered as a successful writer. He mentioned that he had met Wagg in the country, and Doolan told him how that famous novelist received three hundred pounds a volume for every one of his novels. Pen began to calculate instantly whether he might not make five thousand a year.

The very first acquaintance of his own whom Arthur met, as the coach pulled up at the Gloster Coffee House, was his old friend Harry Foker, who came prancing down Arlington Street behind an enormous cab-horse. He had white kid gloves and white reins, and nature had by this time decorated him with a considerable tuft on the chin. A very small cab-boy, vice Stoopid retired, swung on behind Foker's vehicle; knock-kneed and in the tightest leather breeches. Foker looked at the dusty coach, and the smoking horses of the

"Alacrity" by which he had made journeys in former times. — "What, Foker!" cried out Pendennis — "Hullo! Pen, my boy!" said the other, and he waved his whip by way of amity and salute to Arthur, who was very glad to see his queer friend's kind old face. Mr. Doolan had a great respect for Pen who had an acquaintance in such a grand cab; and Pen was greatly excited and pleased to be at liberty and in London. He asked Doolan to come and dine with him at the Covent Garden Coffee House, where he put up: he called a cab and rattled away thither in the highest spirits. He was glad to see the bustling waiter and polite bowing landlord again; and asked for the landlady, and missed the old Boots, and would have liked to shake hands with everybody. He had a hundred pounds in his pocket. He dressed himself in his very best; dined in the coffee-room with a modest pint of sherry (for he was determined to be very economical), and went to the theatre adjoining.

The lights and the music, the crowd and the gaiety, charmed and exhilarated Pen, as those sights will do young fellows from college and the country, to whom they are tolerably new. He laughed at the jokes; he applauded the songs, to the delight of some of the dreary old *habitues* of the boxes, who had ceased long ago to find the least excitement in their place of nightly resort, and were pleased to see any one so fresh, and so much amused. At the end of the first piece, he went and strutted about the lobbies of the theatre, as if he was in a resort of the highest fashion. What tired frequenter of the London pavé is there that cannot remember having had similar early delusions, and would not call them back again? Here was young Foker again, like an ardent votary of pleasure as he was. He was walking with Granby Tiptoff, of the Household Brigade, Lord Tiptoff's brother, and Lord Colchicum, Captain Tiptoff's uncle, a venerable

peer, who had been a man of pleasure since the first French Revolution. Foker rushed upon Pen with eagerness, and insisted that the latter should come into his private box, where a lady with the longest ringlets, and the fairest shoulders, was seated. This was Miss Blenkinsop, the eminent actress of high comedy; and in the back of the box snoozing in a wig, sat old Blenkinsop, her papa. He was described in the theatrical prints as the 'veteran Blenkinsop' — 'the useful Blenkinsop' — 'that old favourite of the public, Blenkinsop' — those parts in the drama, which are called the heavy fathers, were usually assigned to this veteran, who, indeed, acted the heavy father in public, as in private life.

At this time, it being about eleven o'clock, Mrs. Pendenis was gone to bed at Fair Oaks, and wondering whether her dearest Arthur was at rest after his journey. At this time Laura, too, was awake. And at this time yesterday night, as the coach rolled over silent commons, where cottage windows twinkled, and by darkling woods under calm starlit skies, Pen was vowing to reform and to resist temptation, and his heart was at home. Meanwhile the farce was going on very successfully, and Mrs. Leary, in a hussar jacket and braided pantaloons, was enchanting the audience with her archness, her lovely figure, and her delightful ballads.

Pen, being new to the town, would have liked to listen to Mrs. Leary; but the other people in the box did not care about her song or her pantaloons, and kept up an incessant chattering. Tiptoff knew where her *maillots* came from. Colchicum saw her when she came out in '14. Miss Blenkinsop said she sang out of all tune, to the pain and astonishment of Pen, who thought that she was as beautiful as an angel, and that she sang like a nightingale; and when Hoppus came on as Sir Harcourt Featherby, the young man of the piece, the

gentlemen in the box declared that Hoppus was getting too stale, and Tiptoff was for flinging Miss Blenkinsop's bouquet to him.

"Not for the world," cried the daughter of the veteran Blenkinsop; "Lord Colchicum gave it to me."

Pen remembered that nobleman's name, and with a bow and a blush said he believed he had to thank Lord Colchicum for having proposed him at the Megatherium Club, at the request of his uncle, Major Pendennis.

"What, you 're Wigsby's nephew, are you?" said the peer. "I beg your pardon, we always call him Wigsby." Pen blushed to hear his venerable uncle called by such a familiar name. "We ballotted you in last week, didn't we? Yes, last Wednesday night. Your uncle wasn't there."

Here was delightful news for Pen! He professed himself very much obliged indeed to Lord Colchicum, and made him a handsome speech of thanks, to which the other listened, with his double opera-glass up to his eyes. Pen was full of excitement at the idea of being a member of this polite Club.

"Don't be always looking at that box, you naughty creature," cried Miss Blenkinsop.

"She's a dev'lish fine woman, that Mirabel," said Tiptoff; "though Mirabel was a d—d fool to marry her."

"A stupid old spooney," said the peer.

"Mirabell!" cried out Pendennis.

"Ha! ha!" laughed out Harry Foker. "We've heard of her before, haven't we, Pen?"

It was Pen's first love. It was Miss Fotheringay. The year before she had been led to the altar by Sir Charles Mirabel, G. C. B., and formerly envoy to the Court of Pumpernickel, who had taken so active a part in the negotiations before the Congress of Swammerdam, and signed, on behalf of H. B. M., the Peace of Pultusk.

"Emily was always as stupid as an owl," said Miss Blenkinsop.

"Eh! Eh! pas si bête," the old Peer said.

"Oh, for shame!" cried the actress, who did not in the least know what he meant.

And Pen looked out and beheld his first love once again — and wondered how he ever could have loved her.

Thus, on the very first night of his arrival in London, Mr. Arthur Pendennis found himself introduced to a Club, to an actress of genteel comedy and a heavy father of the Stage, and to a dashing society of jovial blades, old and young; for my Lord Colchicum, though stricken in years, bald of head, and enfeebled in person, was still indefatigable in the pursuit of enjoyment, and it was the venerable Viscount's boast that he could drink as much claret as the youngest member of the society which he frequented. He lived with the youth about town: he gave them countless dinners at Richmond and Greenwich: an enlightened patron of the drama in all languages and of the Terpsichorean art, he received dramatic professors of all nations at his banquets — English from the Covent Garden and Strand houses, Italians from the Haymarket, French from their own pretty little theatre, or the boards of the Opera where they danced. And at his villa on the Thames, this pillar of the State gave sumptuous entertainments to scores of young men of fashion, who very affably consorted with the ladies and gentlemen of the green-room — with the former chiefly, for Viscount Colchicum preferred their society as more polished and gay than that of their male brethren.

Pen went the next day and paid his etrance-money at the Club, which operation carried off exactly one-third of his hundred pounds; and took possession of the edifice, and ate his luncheon there with immense satisfaction. He plunged

into an easy chair in the library, and tried to read all the magazines. He wondered whether the members were looking at him, and that they could dare to keep on their hats in such fine rooms. He sat down and wrote a letter to Fair Oaks on the Club paper, and said, what a comfort this place would be to him after his day's work was over. He went over to his uncle's lodgings in Bury Street with some considerable tremor, and in compliance with his mother's earnest desire, that he should instantly call on Major Pendennis; and was not a little relieved to find that the Major had not yet returned to town. His apartments were blank. Brown holland covers covered his library-table, and bills and letters lay on the mantel-piece, grimly awaiting the return of their owner. The Major was on the continent, the landlady of the house said, at Baden Baden, with the Marcus of Steyne. Pen left his card upon the shelf with the rest. Fair Oaks was written on it still.

When the Major returned to London, which he did in time for the fogs of November, after enjoying which he proposed to spend Christmas with some friends in the country, he found another card of Arthur's, on which Lamb Court, Temple, was engraved, and a note from that young gentleman and from his mother, stating that he was come to town, was entered a member of the Upper Temple, and was reading hard for the bar.

Lamb Court, Temple:—where was it? Major Pendennis remembered that some ladies of fashion used to talk of dining with Mr. Ayliffe, the barrister, who was "in society," and who lived there in the King's Bench, of which prison there was probably a branch in the Temple, and Ayliffe was very likely an officer. Mr. Deuceace, Lord Crabs's son, had also lived there, he recollected. He dispatched Morgan to find out where Lamb Court was, and to report upon the lodging selected by Mr. Arthur. That alert messenger had little dif-

ficulty in discovering Mr. Pen's abode. Discreet Morgan had in his time traced people far more difficult to find than Arthur.

"What sort of a place is it, Morgan?" asked the Major, out of the bed-curtains in Bury Street the next morning, as the valet was arranging his toilette in the deep yellow London fog.

"I should say rayther a shy place," said Mr. Morgan. "The lawyers lives there, and has their names on the doors. Mr. Harthur lives three pair high, Sir. Mr. Warrington live there too, Sir."

"Suffolk Warringtons! I shouldn't wonder: a good family," thought the Major. "The cadets of many of our good families follow the robe as a profession. Comfortable rooms, eh?"

"Honly saw the outside of the door, Sir, with Mr. Warrington's name and Mr. Arthur's painted up, and a piece of paper with 'Back at 6;' but I couldn't see no servant, Sir."

"Economical at any rate," said the Major.

"Very, Sir. Three pair, Sir. Nasty black staircase as ever I see. Wonder how a gentleman can live in such a place."

"Pray, who taught you where gentlemen should or should not live, Morgan. Mr. Arthur, Sir, is going to study for the bar, Sir;" the Major said with much dignity; and closed the conversation and began to array himself in the yellow fog.

"Boys will be boys," the mollified uncle thought to himself. "He has written to me a devilish good letter. Colchicum says he has had him to dine, and thinks him a gentleman-like lad. His mother is one of the best creatures in the world. If he has sown his wild oats, and will stick to his business, he may do well yet. Think of Charley Mirabel, the old fool

marrying that flame of his! that Fotheringay! He doesn't like to come here until I give him leave, and puts it in a very manly nice way. I was deuced angry with him, after his Oxbridge escapades — and showed it too when he was here before — Gad, I'll go and see him, hang me if I don't."

"And having ascertained from Morgan that he could reach the Temple without much difficulty, and that a city omnibus would put him down at the gate, the Major one day after breakfast at his Club — not the Polyanthus, whereof Mr. Pen was just elected a member, but another Club: for the Major was too wise to have a nephew as a constant inmate of any house where he was in the habit of passing his time — the Major one day entered one of those public vehicles, and bade the conductor to put him down at the gate of the Upper Temple.

When Major Pendennis reached that dingy portal it was about twelve o'clock in the day; and he was directed by a civil personage with a badge and a white apron, through some dark alleys, and under various melancholy archways into courts each more dismal than the other, until finally he reached Lamb Court. If it was dark in Pall Mall, what was it in Lamb Court? Candles were burning in many of the rooms there — in the pupil-room of Mr. Hodgeman, the special pleader, where six pupils were scribbling declarations under the tallow; in Sir Hokey Walker's clerk's room, where the clerk, a person far more gentlemanlike and cheerful in appearance than the celebrated counsel, his master, was conversing in a patronising manner with the managing clerk of an attorney at the door; and in Curling, the wig-maker's melancholy shop, where, from behind the feeble glimmer of a couple of lights, large sergeants' and judges' wigs were looming drearily, with the blank blocks looking at the lamp-post in the court. Two little clerks were playing at toss-half-

penny under that lamp. A laundress in pattens passed in at one door, a newspaper boy issued from another. A porter, whose white apron was faintly visible, paced up and down. It would be impossible to conceive a place more dismal, and the Major shuddered to think that any one should select such a residence. "Good Ged!" he said, "the poor boy mustn't live on here."

The feeble and filthy oil-lamps, with which the stair-cases of the Upper Temple are lighted of nights, were of course not illuminating the stairs by day, and Major Pendennis, having read with difficulty his nephew's name under Mr. Warrington's on the wall of No. 6, found still greater difficulty in climbing the abominable black stairs, up the banisters of which, which contributed their damp exudations to his gloves, he groped painfully until he came to the third story. A candle was in the passage of one of the two sets of rooms, the doors were open, and the names of Mr. Warrington and Mr. A. Pendennis were very clearly visible to the Major as he went in. An Irish charwoman, with a pail and broom, opened the door for the Major.

"Is that the beer?" cried out a great voice: "give us hold of it."

The gentleman who was speaking was seated on a table, unshorn and smoking a short pipe; in a farther chair sate Pen, with a cigar, and his legs near the fire. A little boy, who acted as the clerk of these gentlemen, was grinning in the Major's face, at the idea of his being mistaken for beer. Here, upon the third floor, the rooms were somewhat lighter, and the Major could see the place.

"Pen, my boy, it's I — it's your uncle," he said, choking with the smoke. But as most young men of fashion used the weed, he pardoned the practice easily enough.

Mr. Warrington got up from the table, and Pen, in a very perturbed manner, from his chair. "Beg your pardon for mistaking you," said Warrington, in a frank, loud voice. "Will you take a cigar, Sir? Clear those things off the chair, Pidgeon, and pull it round to the fire."

Pen flung his cigar into the grate; and was pleased with the cordiality with which his uncle shook him by the hand. As soon as he could speak for the stairs and the smoke, the Major began to ask Pen very kindly about himself and about his mother; for blood is blood, and he was pleased once more to see the boy.

Pen gave his news, and then introduced Mr. Warrington — an old Boniface man — whose chambers he shared.

The Major was quite satisfied when he heard that Mr. Warrington was a younger son of Sir Miles Warrington of Suffolk. He had served with an uncle of his in India and in New South Wales, years ago.

"Took a sheep-farm there, Sir, made a fortune — better thing than law or soldiering," Warrington said. "Think I shall go there too." And here the expected beer coming in, in a tankard with a glass bottom, Mr. Warrington, with a laugh, said he supposed the Major would not have any, and took a long, deep draught himself, after which he wiped his wrist across his beard with great satisfaction. The young man was perfectly easy and unembarrassed. He was dressed in a ragged old shooting-jacket, and had a bristly blue beard. He was drinking beer like a coal-heaver, and yet you couldn't but perceive that he was a gentleman.

When he had sate for a minute or two after his draught he went out of the room, leaving it to Pen and his uncle, that they might talk over family affairs were they so inclined.

"Rough and ready, your cham seems," the Major said. "Somewhat different from your dandy friends at Oxbridge."

"Times are altered," Arthur replied, with a blush. "Warrington is only just called, and has no business, but he knows law pretty well; and until I can afford to read with a pleader, I use his books, and get his help."

"Is that one of the books?" the Major asked, with a smile. A French novel was lying at the foot of Pen's chair.

"This is not a working day, Sir," the lad said. "We were out very late at a party last night — at Lady Whiston's," Pen added, knowing his uncle's weakness. "Every body in town was there except you, Sir; Counts, Ambassadors, Turks, Stars and Garters — I don't know who — it's all in the paper — and my name, too," said Pen, with great glee. "I met an old flame of mine there, Sir," he added, with a laugh. "You know whom I mean, Sir, — Lady Mirabel — to whom I was introduced over again. She shook hands, and was gracious enough. I may thank you for being out of that scrape, Sir. She presented me to the husband, too — an old beau in a star and a blonde wig. He does not seem very wise. She has asked me to call on her, Sir: and I may go now without any fear of losing my heart."

"What, we have had some new loves, have we?" the Major asked, in high good-humour.

"Some two or three," Mr. Pen said, laughing. "But I don't put on my *grand sérieux* any more, Sir. That goes off after the first flame."

"Very right, my dear boy. Flames and darts and passion, and that sort of thing, do very well for a lad: and you were but a lad when that affair with the Fotheringill — Fotheringay — (what's her name?) came off. But a man of the world gives up those follies. You still may do very well. You have been hit, but you may recover. You are heir to a little independence, which everybody fancies is a doosid deal more. You have a good name, good wits, good manners, and a good

person — and, begad! I don't see why you shouldn't marry a woman with money — get into Parliament — distinguish yourself, and — and, in fact, that sort of thing. Remember, it's as easy to marry a rich woman as a poor woman: and a devilish deal pleasanter to sit down to a good dinner, than to a scrag of mutton in lodgings. Make up your mind to that. A woman with a good jointure is a doosid deal easier a profession than the law, let me tell you. Look out; I shall be on the watch for you: and I shall die content, my boy, if I can see you with a good lady-like wife, and a good carriage, and a good pair of horses, living in society, and seeing your friends, like a gentleman. Would you like to vegetate like your dear good mother at Fair Oaks? Dammy, Sir! life, without money and the best society, isn't worth having." It was thus this affectionate uncle spoke, and expounded to Pen his simple philosophy.

"What would my mother and Laura say to this, I wonder?" thought the lad. Indeed old Pendennis's morals were not their morals, nor was his wisdom theirs.

This affecting conversation between uncle and nephew had scarcely concluded, when Warrington came out of his bed-room, no longer in rags, but dressed like a gentleman, straight and tall, and perfectly frank and good-humoured. He did the honours of his ragged sitting-room with as much ease as if it had been the finest apartment in London. And queer rooms they were in which the Major found his nephew. The carpet was full of holes — the table stained with many circles of Warrington's previous ale-pots. There was a small library of law-books, books of poetry, and of mathematics, of which he was very fond. (He had been one of the hardest livers and hardest readers of his time at Oxbridge, where the name of Stunning Warrington was yet famous for beating bargemen, pulling matches, winning prizes, and drinking

milk-punch.) A print of the old college hung up over the mantel-piece, and some battered volumes of Plato, bearing its well-known arms, were on the book-shelves. There were two easy chairs; a standing reading-desk piled with bills; a couple of very meagre briefs on a broken-legged study-table. Indeed, there was scarcely any article of furniture that had not been in the wars, and was not wounded. "Look here, Sir, here is Pen's room. He is a dandy, and has got curtains to his bed, and wears shiny boots, and a silver dressing-case." Indeed, Pen's room was rather coquettishly arranged, and a couple of neat prints of opera-dancers, besides a drawing of Fair Oaks, hung on the walls. In Warrington's room there was scarcely any article of furniture, save a great shower-bath, and a heap of books by the bed-side: where he lay upon straw like Margery Daw, and smoked his pipe, and read half through the night his favourite poetry or mathematics.

When he had completed his simple toilette, Mr. Warrington came out of this room, and proceeded to the cupboard to search for his breakfast.

"Might I offer you a mutton-chop, Sir? We cook 'em ourselves hot and hot; and I am teaching Pen the first principles of law, cooking, and morality at the same time. He's a lazy beggar, Sir, and too much of a dandy."

And so saying, Mr. Warrington wiped a gridiron with a piece of paper, put it on the fire, and on it two mutton-chops, and took from the cupboard a couple of plates and some knives and silver forks, and castors.

"Say but a word, Major Pendennis," he said; "there's another chop in the cupboard, or Pidgeon shall go out and get you anything you like."

Major Pendennis sate in wonder and amusement, but he said he had just breakfasted, and wouldn't have any lunch.

So Warrington cooked the chops, and popped them hissing hot upon the plates.

Pen fell to at his chop with a good appetite, after looking up at his uncle, and seeing that gentleman was still in good-humour.

"You see, Sir," Warrington said, "Mrs. Flanagan isn't here to do 'em, and we can't employ the boy, for the little beggar is all day occupied cleaning Pen's boots. And now for another swig at the beer. Pen drinks tea; it's only fit for old women."

"And so you were at Lady Whiston's last night," the Major said, not in truth knowing what observation to make to this rough diamond.

"I at Lady Whiston's! not such a flat, Sir. I don't care for female society. In fact it bores me. I spent my evening philosophically at the Back Kitchen."

"The Back Kitchen? indeed!" said the Major.

"I see you don't know what it means," Warrington said. "Ask Pen. He was there after Lady Whiston's. Tell Major Pendennis about the Back Kitchen, Pen — don't be ashamed of yourself."

So Pen said it was a little eccentric society of men of letters and men about town, to which he had been presented; and the Major began to think that the young fellow had seen a good deal of the world since his arrival in London.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Knights of the Temple.

COLLEGES, schools, and inns of court, still have some respect for antiquity, and maintain a great number of the customs and institutions of our ancestors, with which those persons who do not particularly regard their forefathers, or perhaps are not very well acquainted with them, have long since done away. A well-ordained workhouse or prison is much better provided with the appliances of health, comfort, and cleanliness, than a respectable Foundation School, a venerable College, or a learned Inn. In the latter place of residence men are contented to sleep in dingy closets, and to pay for the sitting-room and the cupboard, which is their dormitory, the price of a good villa and garden in the suburbs, or of a roomy house in the neglected squares of the town. The poorest mechanic in Spitalfields has a cistern and an unbounded supply of water at his command; but the gentlemen of the inns of court, and the gentlemen of the universities, have their supply of this cosmetic fetched in jugs by laundresses and bedmakers, and live in abodes which were erected long before the custom of cleanliness and decency obtained among us. There are individuals still alive who sneer at the people and speak of them with epithets of scorn. Gentlemen, there can be but little doubt that your ancestors were the Great Unwashed: and in the Temple especially, it is pretty certain, that, only under the greatest difficulties and restrictions, the virtue which has been pronounced to be next to godliness could have been practised at all.

Old Grump, of the Norfolk Circuit, who had lived for more than thirty years in the chambers under those occupied

by Warrington and Pendennis, and who used to be awakened by the roaring shower-baths which those gentlemen had erected in their apartments, — a part of the contents of which occasionally trickled through the roof into Mr. Grump's room, — declared that the practice was an absurd, newfangled, dandyfied folly, and daily cursed the laundress who slopped the staircase by which he had to pass. Grump, now much more than half a century old, had indeed never used the luxury in question. He had done without water very well, and so had our fathers before him. Of all those knights and baronets, lords and gentlemen, bearing arms, whose escutcheons are painted upon the walls of the famous hall of the Upper Temple, was there no philanthropist good-natured enough to devise a set of Hummums for the benefit of the lawyers, his fellows and successors? The Temple historian makes no mention of such a scheme. There is Pump Court and Fountain Court, with their hydraulic apparatus, but one never heard of a bencher disporting in the fountain; and can't but think how many a counsel learned in the law of old days might have benefitted by the pump.

Nevertheless, those venerable Inns which have the Lamb and Flag and the Winged Horse for their ensigns, have attractions for persons who inhabit them, and a share of rough comforts and freedom, which men always remember with pleasure. I don't know whether the student of law permits himself the refreshment of enthusiasm, or indulges in poetical reminiscences as he passes by historical chambers, and says, "Yonder Eldon lived — upon this site Coke mused upon Lyttleton — here Chitty toiled — here Barnwell and Alderson joined in their famous labours — here Byles composed his great work upon bills, and Smith compiled his immortal leading cases — here Gustavus still toils, with Solomon to aid him:" but the man of letters can't but love the place which

has been inhabited by so many of his brethren, or peopled by their creations as real to us at this day as the authors whose children they were — and Sir Roger de Coverley walking in the Temple Garden, and discoursing with Mr. Spectator about the beauties in hoops and patches who are sauntering over the grass, is just as lively a figure to me as old Samuel Johnson rolling through the fog with the Scotch gentleman at his heels on their way to Dr. Goldsmith's chambers in Brick Court; or Harry Fielding, with inked ruffles and a wet towel round his head, dashing off articles at midnight for the Covent Garden Journal, while the printer's boy is asleep in the passage.

If we could but get the history of a single day as it passed in any one of those four-storied houses in the dingy court where our friends Pen and Warrington dwelt, some Temple Asmodeus might furnish us with a queer volume. There may be a great parliamentary counsel on the ground-floor, who drives off to Belgravia at dinner time, when his clerk, too, becomes a gentleman, and goes away to entertain his friends, and to take his pleasure. But a short time since he was hungry and briefless in some garret of the Inn; lived by stealthy literature; hoped, and waited, and sickened, and no clients came; exhausted his own means and his friends' kindness; had to remonstrate humbly with duns, and to implore the patience of poor creditors. Ruin seemed to be staring him in the face, when, behold, a turn of the wheel of fortune, and the lucky wretch in possession of one of those prodigious prizes which are sometimes drawn in the great lottery of the Bar. Many a better lawyer than himself does not make a fifth part of the income of his clerk, who, a few months since, could scarcely get credit for blacking for his master's unpaid boots. On the first-floor, perhaps, you will have a venerable man whose name is famous, who has lived for half a century

in the Inn, whose brains are full of books, and whose shelves are stored with classical and legal lore. He has lived alone all these fifty years, alone and for himself, amassing learning, and compiling a fortune. He comes home now at night alone from the club, where he has been dining freely, to the lonely chambers where he lives a godless old recluse. When he dies, his Inn will erect a tablet to his honour, and his heirs burn a part of his library. Would you like to have such a prospect for your old age, to store up learning and money, and end so? But we must not linger too long by Mr. Doomsday's door. Worthy Mr. Grump lives over him, who is also an ancient inhabitant of the Inn, and who, when Doomsday comes home to read Catullus, is sitting down with three steady seniors of his standing, to a steady rubber at whist, after a dinner at which they have consumed their three steady bottles of Port. You may see the old boys asleep at the Temple Church of a Sunday. Attornies seldom trouble them, and they have small fortunes of their own. On the other side of the third landing, where Pen and Warrington live, till long after midnight, sits Mr. Paley, who took the highest honours, and who is a fellow of his college, who will sit and read and note cases until two o'clock in the morning; who will rise at seven and be at the pleader's chambers as soon as they are open, where he will work until an hour before dinner-time; who will come home from Hall and read and note cases again until dawn next day, when perhaps Mr. Arthur Pendennis and his friend Mr. Warrington are returning from some of their wild expeditions. How differently employed Mr. Paley has been! He has not been throwing himself away: he has only been bringing a great intellect laboriously down to the comprehension of a mean subject, and in his fierce grasp of that, resolutely excluding from his mind all higher thoughts, all better things, all the wisdom of philosophers and historians, all the thoughts

of poets; all wit, fancy, reflection, art, love, truth altogether — so that he may master that enormous legend of the law, which he proposes to gain his livelihood by expounding. Warrington and Paley had been competitors for university honours in former days, and had run each other hard; and everybody said now that the former was wasting his time and energies, whilst all people praised Paley for his industry. There may be doubts, however, as to which was using his time best. The one could afford time to think, and the other never could. The one could have sympathies and do kindnesses; and the other must needs be always selfish. He could not cultivate a friendship or do a charity, or admire a work of genius, or kindle at the sight of beauty or the sound of a sweet song — he had no time, and no eyes for anything but his law-books. All was dark outside his reading-lamp. Love, and Nature, and Art, (which is the expression of our praise and sense of the beautiful world of God), were shut out from him. And as he turned off his lonely lamp at night, he never thought but that he had spent the day profitably, and went to sleep alike thankless and remorseless. But he shuddered when he met his old companion Warrington on the stairs, and shunned him as one that was doomed to perdition.

It may have been the sight of that cadaverous ambition and self-complacent meanness, which showed itself in Paley's yellow face, and twinkled in his narrow eyes, or it may have been a natural appetite for pleasure and joviality, of which it must be confessed Mr. Pen was exceedingly fond, which deterred that luckless youth from pursuing his designs upon the Bench or the Woolsack with the ardour, or rather steadiness, which is requisite in gentlemen who would climb to those seats of honour. He enjoyed the Temple life with a great deal of relish: his worthy relatives thought he was reading as became a regular student; and his uncle wrote

home congratulatory letters to the kind widow at Fair Oaks, announcing that the lad had sown his wild oats, and was becoming quite steady. The truth is, that it was a new sort of excitement to Pen the life in which he was now engaged, and having given up some of the dandyfied pretensions, and fine-gentleman airs which he had contracted among his aristocratic college acquaintances, of whom he now saw but little, the rough pleasures and amusements of a London bachelor were very novel and agreeable to him, and he enjoyed them all. Time was he would have envied the dandies their fine horses in Rotten Row, but he was contented now to walk in the Park and look at them. He was too young to succeed in London society without a better name and a larger fortune than he had, and too lazy to get on without these adjuncts. Old Pendennis fondly thought he was busied with law because he neglected the social advantages presented to him, and, having been at half a dozen balls and evening parties, retreated before their dullness and sameness; and whenever anybody made inquiries of the worthy Major about his nephew, the old gentleman said the young rascal was reformed, and could not be got away from his books. But the Major would have been almost as much horrified as Mr. Paley was, had he known what was Mr. Pen's real course of life, and how much pleasure entered into his law studies.

A long morning's reading, a walk in the park, a pull on the river, a stretch up the hill to Hampstead, and a modest tavern dinner; a bachelor night passed here or there, in joviality, not vice (for Arthur Pendennis admired women so heartily that he never could bear the society of any of them that were not, in his fancy at least, good and pure); a quiet evening at home, alone with a friend and a pipe or two, and a humble potation of British spirits, whereof Mrs. Flanagan, the laundress, invariably tested the quality; — these were our

young gentleman's pursuits, and it must be owned that his life was not unpleasant. In term-time, Mr. Pen showed a most praiseworthy regularity in performing one part of the law-student's course of duty, and eating his dinners in Hall. Indeed, that Hall of the Upper Temple is a sight not uninteresting, and with the exception of some trifling improvements and anachronisms which have been introduced into the practice there, a man may sit down and fancy that he joins in a meal of the seventeenth century. The bar have their messes, the students their tables apart; the benchers sit at the high table on the raised platform, surrounded by pictures of judges of the law and portraits of royal personages who have honoured its festivities with their presence and patronage. Pen looked about, on his first introduction, not a little amused with the scene which he witnessed. Among his comrades of the student class there were gentlemen of all ages, from sixty to seventeen; stout grey-headed attornies who were proceeding to take the superior dignity, — dandies and men-about-town who wished for some reason to be barristers of seven years standing, — swarthy, black-eyed natives of the Colonies, who came to be called here before they practised in their own islands, — and many gentlemen of the Irish nation, who make a sojourn in Middle Temple Lane before they return to the green country of their birth. There were little squads of reading students who talked law all dinner-time; there were rowing men, whose discourse was of sculling matches, the Red House, Vauxhall and the Opera; there were others great in politics, and orators of the students' debating clubs; with all of which sets, except the first, whose talk was an almost unknown and a quite uninteresting language to him, Mr. Pen made a gradual acquaintance, and had many points of sympathy.

The ancient and liberal Inn of the Upper Temple provides

in its Hall, and for a most moderate price, an excellent wholesome dinner of soup, meat, tarts, and port wine or sherry, for the barristers and students who attend that place of refectation. The parties are arranged in messes of four, each of which quartets has its piece of beef or leg of mutton, its sufficient apple-pie and its bottle of wine. But the honest habitués of the hall, amongst the lower rank of students, who have a taste for good living, have many harmless arts by which they improve their banquet, and innocent "dodges" (if we may be permitted to use an excellent phrase that has become vernacular since the appearance of the last dictionaries) by which they strive to attain for themselves more delicate food than the common every-day roast meat of the students' tables.

"Wait a bit," said Mr. Lowton, one of these Temple gourmands. "Wait a bit," said Mr. Lowton, tugging at Pen's gown — "the tables are very full, and there's only three benchers to eat ten side dishes — if we wait, perhaps we shall get something from their table." And Pen looked with some amusement, as did Mr. Lowton with eyes of fond desire, towards the benchers' high table, where three old gentlemen were standing up before a dozen silver dish-covers, while the clerk was quavering out a grace.

Lowton was great in the conduct of the dinner. His aim was to manage so as to be the first, a captain of the mess, and to secure for himself the thirteenth glass of the bottle of port wine. Thus he would have the command of the joint on which he operated his favourite cuts, and made rapid dexterous appropriations of gravy, which amused Pen infinitely. Poor Jack Lowton! thy pleasures in life were very harmless; an eager epicure, thy desires did not go beyond eighteenpence.

Pen was somewhat older than many of his fellow-students, and there was that about his style and appearance which, as we have said, was rather haughty and impertinent, that stamped him as a man of *ton* — very unlike those pale students who were talking law to one another, and those ferocious dandies, in rowing shirts and astonishing pins and waistcoats, who represented the idle part of the little community. The humble and good-natured Lowton had felt attracted by Pen's superior looks and presence — and had made acquaintance with him at the mess by opening the conversation.

"This is boiled-beef day, I believe, Sir," said Lowton to Pen.

"Upon my word, Sir, I'm not aware," said Pen, hardly able to contain his laughter, but added, "I'm a stranger; this is my first term;" on which Lowton began to point out to him the notabilities in the Hall.

"That's Boosey the benchler, the bald one sitting under the picture and aving soup; I wonder whether it's turtle? They often ave turtle. Next is Balls, the King's Counsel, and Swettenham — Hodge and Swettenham, you know. That's old Grump, the senior of the bar; they say he's dined here forty years. They often send 'em down their fish from the benchers to the senior table. Do you see those four fellows seated opposite us? Those are regular swells — tip-top fellows, I can tell you — Mr. Trail, the Bishop of Ealing's son, Honourable Fred. Ringwood, Lord Cinqbar's brother, you know *He'll* have a good place, I bet any money; and Bob Suckling, who's always with him — a high fellow too. Ha! ha!" Here Lowton burst into a laugh.

"What is it?" said Pen, still amused.

"I say, I like to mess with those chaps," Lowton said, winking his eye knowingly, and pouring out his glass of wine.

"And why?" asked Pen.

"Why! they don't come down here to dine you know, they only make believe to dine. *They* dine here, Law bless you! They go to some of the swell clubs, or else to some grand dinner party. You see their names in the 'Morning Post' at all the fine parties in London. Why, I bet anything that Ringwood has his cab, or Trail his Brougham (he's a devil of a fellow, and makes the bishop's money spin, I can tell you) at the corner of Essex-street at this minute. They dine! They won't dine these two hours, I dare say."

"But why should you like to mess with them, if they don't eat any dinner?" Pen asked, still puzzled. "There's plenty, isn't there?"

"How green you are," said Lowton. "Excuse me, but you *are* green. They don't drink any wine, don't you see, and a fellow gets the bottle to himself if he likes it when he messes with those three chaps. That's why Corkoran got in with 'em."

"Ah, Mr. Lowton, I see you are a sly fellow," Pen said, delighted with his acquaintance: on which the other modestly replied, that he had lived in London the better part of his life, and of course had his eyes about him; and went on with his catalogue to Pen.

"There's a lot of Irish here," he said; "that Corkoran's one, and I can't say I like him. You see that handsome chap with the blue neckcloth, and pink shirt, and yellow waistcoat, that's another; that's Molloy Maloney of Ballymaloney, and nephew to Major-General Sir Hector O'Dowd, he, he," Lowton said, trying to imitate the Hibernian accent. "He's always bragging about his uncle; and came into Hall in silver-striped trowsers the day he had been presented. That other near him, with the long black hair, is a tremendous rebel. By Jove, Sir, to hear him at the Forum it makes your blood freeze; and the next is an Irishman, too, Jack Finucane,

reporter of a newspaper. They all stick together, those Irish. It's your turn to fill your glass. What? you won't have any port? Don't like port with your dinner? Here's your health." And this worthy man found himself not the less attached to Pendennis because the latter disliked port wine at dinner.

It was while Pen was taking his share of one of these dinners with his acquaintance Lowton as the captain of his mess, that there came to join them a gentleman in a barrister's gown, who could not find a seat, as it appeared, amongst the persons of his own degree, and who strode over the table and took his place on the bench where Pen sate. He was dressed in old clothes and a faded gown, which hung behind him, and he wore a shirt which, though clean, was extremely ragged, and very different to the magnificent pink raiment of Mr. Molloy Maloney, who occupied a commanding position in the next mess. In order to notify their appearance at dinner, it is the custom of the gentlemen who eat in the Upper Temple Hall to write down their names upon slips of paper, which are provided for that purpose, with a pencil for each mess. Lowton wrote his name first, then came Arthur Pendennis, and the next was that of the gentleman in the old clothes. He smiled when he saw Pen's name, and looked at him. "We ought to know each other," he said. "We're both Boniface men; my name's Warrington."

"Are you St— Warrington?" Pen said, delighted to see this hero.

Warrington laughed — "Stunning Warrington — yes," he said. "I recollect you in your fresh man's term. But you appear to have quite cut me out."

"The college talks about you still," said Pen, who had a generous admiration for talent and pluck. "The barge-man you thrashed, Bill Simes, don't you remember, wants

you up again at Oxbridge. The Miss Notleys, the haberdashers —”

“Hush!” said Warrington — “glad to make your acquaintance, Pendennis. Heard a good deal about you.”

The young men were friends immediately, and at once deep in college-talk. And Pen, who had been acting rather the fine gentleman on a previous day, when he pretended to Lowton that he could not drink port wine at dinner, seeing Warrington take his share with a great deal of gusto, did not scruple about helping himself any more, rather to the disappointment of honest Lowton. When the dinner was over, Warrington asked Arthur where he was going.

“I thought of going home to dress, and hear Grisi in Norma,” Pen said.

“Are you going to meet anybody there?” he asked.

Pen said, “No — only to hear the music, of which he was very fond.”

“You had much better come home and smoke a pipe with me,” said Warrington, — “a very short one. Come, I live close by in Lamb Court, and we’ll talk over Boniface and old times.”

They went away; Lowton sighed after them. He knew that Warrington was a baronet’s son, and he looked up with simple reverence to all the aristocracy. Pen and Warrington became sworn friends from that night. Warrington’s cheerfulness and jovial temper, his good sense, his rough welcome, and his never-failing pipe of tobacco, charmed Pen, who found it more pleasant to dive into shilling taverns with him, than to dine in solitary state amongst the silent and polite frequenters of the Polyanthus.

Ere long Pen gave up the lodgings in St. James’s, to which he had migrated on quitting his hotel, and found it was much more economical to take up his abode with Warrington in

Lamb Court, and furnish and occupy his friend's vacant room there. For it must be said of Pen, that no man was more easily led than he to do a thing, when it was a novelty, or when he had a mind to it. And Pidgeon, the youth, and Flanagan, the laundress, divided their allegiance now between Warrington and Pen.

CHAPTER IX

Old and new acquaintances.

ELATED with the idea of seeing life, Pen went into a hundred queer London haunts. He liked to think he was consorting with all sorts of men—so he beheld coal-heavers in their tap-rooms; boxers in their inn-parlours; honest citizens disporting in the suburbs or on the river; and he would have liked to hob and nob with celebrated pickpockets, or drink a pot of ale with a company of burglars and cracksmen, had chance afforded him an opportunity of making the acquaintance of this class of society. It was good to see the gravity with which Warrington listened to the Tutbury Pet or the Brighton Stunner at the Champion's Arms, and behold the interest which he took in the coal-heaving company assembled at the Fox-under-the-Hill. His acquaintance with the public-houses of the metropolis and its neighbourhood, and with the frequenters of their various parlours, was prodigious. He was the personal friend of the landlord and landlady, and welcome to the bar as to the club-room. He liked their society, he said, better than that of his own class, whose manners annoyed him, and whose conversation bored him. "In society," he used to say, "everybody is the same, wears the same dress, eats and drinks, and says the same things; one young dandy at the club talks and looks just like another, one

Miss at a ball exactly resembles another, whereas there's character here. I like to talk with the strongest man in England, or the man who can drink the most beer in England, or with that tremendous republican of a hatter, who thinks Thistlewood was the greatest character in history. I like gin-and-water better than claret. I like a sanded floor in Carnaby Market better than a chalked one in Mayfair. I prefer Snobs, I own it." Indeed, this gentleman was a social republican; and it never entered his head while conversing with Jack and Tom that he was in any respect their better; although, perhaps, the deference which they paid him might secretly please him.

Pen followed him then to these various resorts of men with great glee and assiduity. But he was considerably younger, and therefore much more pompous and stately than Warrington; in fact a young prince in disguise, visiting the poor of his father's kingdom. They respected him as a high chap, a fine fellow, a regular young swell. He had somehow about him an air of imperious good-humour, and a royal frankness and majesty, although he was only heir apparent to twopence-halfpenny, and but one in descent from a gallypot. If these positions are made for us, we acquiesce in them very easily; and are always pretty ready to assume a superiority over those who are as good as ourselves. Pen's condescension at this time of his life was a fine thing to witness. Amongst men of ability this assumption and impertinence passes off with extreme youth: but it is curious to watch the conceit of a generous and clever lad — there is something almost touching in that early exhibition of simplicity and folly.

So, after reading pretty hard of a morning, and, I fear, not law merely, but politics and general history and literature, which were as necessary for the advancement and instruction of a young man as mere dry law, after applying with tolerable

assiduity to letters, to reviews, to elemental books of law, and, above all, to the newspaper, until the hour of dinner was drawing nigh, these young gentlemen would sally out upon the town with great spirits and appetite, and bent upon enjoying a merry night as they had passed a pleasant forenoon. It was a jovial time, that of four-and-twenty, when every muscle of mind and body was in healthy action, when the world was new as yet, and one moved over it spurred onwards by good spirits and the delightful capability to enjoy. If ever we feel young afterwards, it is with the comrades of that time: the tunes we hum in our old age, are those we learned then. Sometimes, perhaps, the festivity of that period revives in our memory; but how dingy the pleasure-garden has grown, how tattered the garlands look, how scant and old the company, and what a number of the lights have gone out since that day! Grey hairs have come on like daylight streaming in — daylight and a headache with it. Pleasure has gone to bed with the rouge on her cheeks. Well, friend, let us walk through the day, sober and sad, but friendly.

I wonder what Laura and Helen would have said, could they have seen, as they might not unfrequently have done had they been up and in London, in the very early morning when the bridges began to blush in the sunrise, and the tranquil streets of the city to shine in the dawn, Mr. Pen and Mr. Warrington rattling over the echoing flags towards the Temple, after one of their wild nights of carouse — nights wild, but not so wicked as such nights sometimes are, for Warrington was a woman-hater; and Pen, as we have said, too lofty to stoop to a vulgar intrigue. Our young Prince of Fair Oaks never could speak to one of the sex but with respectful courtesy, and shrank from a coarse word or gesture with instinctive delicacy — for though we have seen him fall in love with a fool, as his betters and inferiors have done, and as it is

probable that he did more than once in his life, yet for the time of the delusion it was always as a Goddess that he considered her, and chose to wait upon her. Men serve women kneeling — when they get on their feet, they go away.

That was what an acquaintance of Pen's said to him in his hard homely way; — an old friend with whom he had fallen in again in London — no other than honest Mr. Bows of the Chatteries Theatre, who was now employed as piano-forte player, to accompany the eminent lyrical talent which nightly delighted the public at the Fielding's Head in Covent Garden: and where was held the little club called the Back Kitchen.

Numbers of Pen's friends frequented this very merry meeting. The Fielding's Head had been a house of entertainment, almost since the time when the famous author of Tom Jones presided as magistrate in the neighbouring Bow Street, his place was pointed out, and the chair said to have been his, still occupied by the president of the night's entertainment. The worthy Cutts, the landlord of the Fielding's Head, generally occupied this post when not disabled by gout or other illness. His jolly appearance and fine voice may be remembered by some of my male readers: he used to sing profusely in the course of the harmonic meeting, and his songs were of what may be called the British Brandy and Water School of Song — such as "The Good Old English Gentleman," "Dear Tom, this Brown Jug," and so forth — songs in which pathos and hospitality are blended, and the praises of good liquor and the social affections are chanted in a barytone voice. The charms of our women, the heroic deeds of our naval and military commanders, are often sung in the ballads of this school, and many a time in my youth have I admired how Cutts the singer, after he had worked us all up to patriotic enthusiasm, by describing the way in which the

brave Abercrombie received his death-wound, or made us join him in tears, which he shed liberally himself, as in faltering accents he told how autumn's falling leaf "proclaimed the old man he must die" — how Cutts the singer became at once Cutts the landlord, and, before the applause which we were making with our fists on his table, in compliment to his heart-stirring melody, had died away, was calling, "Now, gentlemen, give your orders, the waiter's in the room — John, a champagne cup for Mr. Green. I think, Sir, you said sausages and mashed potatoes? John, attend on the gentleman."

"And I'll thank ye give me a glass of punch too, John, and take care the wather boils," a voice would cry not unfrequently, a well-known voice to Pen, which made the lad blush and start when he heard it first — that of the venerable Captain Costigan; who was now established in London, and one of the great pillars of the harmonic meetings at the Fielding's Head.

The Captain's manners and conversation brought very many young men to the place. He was a character, and his fame had begun to spread soon after his arrival in the metropolis, and especially after his daughter's marriage. He was great in his conversation to the friend for the time being, (who was the neighbour drinking by his side,) about "me daughter." He told of her marriage, and of the events previous and subsequent to that ceremony; of the carriages she kept; of Mirabel's adoration for her and for him; of the hundred pounds which he was at perfect liberty to draw from his son-in-law, whenever necessity urged him. And having stated that it was his firm intention to "dthraw next Sathurday, I give ye me secred word and honour next Sathurday, the fourteenth, when ye'll see the money will be handed over to me at Coutts's, the very instant I present the cheque," the Captain

would not unfrequently propose to borrow a half-crown of his friend until the arrival of that day of Greek Calends, when, on the honour of an officer and gentleman, he would reapee the thrilling obligation.

Sir Charles Mirabel had not that enthusiastic attachment to his father-in-law, of which the latter sometimes boasted, (although in other stages of emotion Cos would inveigh, with tears in his eyes, against the ingratitude of the child of his bosom, and the stinginess of the wealthy old man who had married her); but the pair had acted not unkindly towards Costigan; had settled a small pension on him, which was paid regularly, and forestalled with even more regularity by poor Cos; and the period of the payments were always well known by his friend at the Fielding's Head, whither the honest Captain took care to repair, bank notes in hand, calling loudly for change in the midst of the full harmonic meeting. "I think ye'll find *that* note won't be refused at the Bank of England, Cutts, my boy," Captain Costigan would say. "Bows, have a glass? Ye needn't stint yourself to-night, anyhow; and a glass of punch will make ye play *con spirito*." For he was lavishly free with his money when it came to him, and was scarcely known to button his breeches pocket, except when the coin was gone, or sometimes, indeed, when a creditor came by.

It was in one of these moments of exultation that Pen found his old friend swaggering at the singers' table at the Back Kitchen of the Fielding's Head, and ordering glasses of brandy and water for any of his acquaintances who made their appearance in the apartment. Warrington, who was on confidential terms with the bass singer, made his way up to this quarter of the room, and Pen walked at his friend's heels.

Pen started and blushed to see Costigan. He had just come from Lady Whiston's party, where he had met and spoken

with the Captain's daughter again for the first time after very old old days. He came up with out-stretched hand, very kindly and warmly to greet the old man; still retaining a strong remembrance of the time when Costigan's daughter had been everything in the world to him. For though this young gentleman may have been somewhat capricious in his attachments, and occasionally have transferred his affections from one woman to another, yet he always respected the place where Love had dwelt, and, like the Sultan of Turkey, desired that honours should be paid to the lady towards whom he had once thrown the royal pocket-handkerchief.

The tipsy Captain returning the clasp of Pen's hand with all the strength of a palm which had become very shaky by the constant lifting up of weights of brandy and water, looked hard in Pen's face, and said "Grecious Heavens, is it possible? Me dear boy, me dear fellow, me dear friend;" and then with a look of muddled curiosity, fairly broke down with, "I know your face, me dear dear friend, but, bedad, I've forgot your name." Five years of constant punch had passed since Pen and Costigan met. Arthur was a good deal changed, and the Captain may surely be excused for forgetting him; when a man at the actual moment sees things double, we may expect that his view of the past will be rather muzzy.

Pen saw his condition and laughed, although, perhaps, he was somewhat mortified. "Don't you remember me, Captain?" he said. "I am Pendennis — Arthur Pendennis, of Chatteries."

The sound of the young man's friendly voice recalled and steadied Cos's tipsy remembrance, and he saluted Arthur, as soon as he knew him, with a loud volley of friendly greetings. Pen was his dearest boy, his gallant young friend, his noble collagian, whom he had held in his inmost heart ever since they had parted — how was his fawther, no, his mother, and

his guardian, the General, the Major. "I preshoom, from your apparance, that you 've come into your prawpantee; and, bedad, yee 'll spend it like a man of spirit — I 'll go bail for *that*. No? not yet come into your estete? If ye want any thrifle, heark ye, there 's poor old Jack Costigan has got a guinea or two in his pocket — and, be heavens! *you* shall never want, Awthur, me dear boy. What 'll ye have? John, come hither, and look aloive; give this gentleman a glass of punch, and I 'll pay for 't. — Your friend? I 've seen him before. Permit me to have the honour of making meself known to ye, Sir, and requesting ye 'll take a glass of punch."

"I don't envy Sir Charles Mirabel his father-in-law," thought Pendennis. "And how is my old friend, Mr. Bows, Captain? Have you any news of him, and do you see him still?"

"No doubt he 's very well," said the Captain, jingling his money, and whistling the air of a song — "The Little Doodeen" — for the singing of which he was celebrated at the Fielding's Head. "Me dear boy — I 've forgot your name again — but my name 's Costigan, Jack Costigan, and I 'd loike ye to take as many tumblers of punch in my name as ever ye loike. Ye know my name; I 'm not ashamed of it." And so the Captain went maundering on.

"It 's pay-day with the General," said Mr. Hodgen, the bass singer, with whom Warrington was in deep conversations: "and he 's a precious deal more than half seas over. He has already tried that 'Little Doodeen' of his, and broke it, too, just before I sang 'King Death.' Have you heard my new song. 'The Body Snatcher,' Mr. Warrington? — angored at Saint Bartholomew's the other night — composed expressly for me. Per'aps you or your friend would like a copy of the song, Sir? John, just 'ave the kyndness to 'and over a 'Body

Snatcher' 'ere, will yer? — There 's a portrait of me, Sir, as I sing it — as the Snatcher — considered rather like."

"Thank you," said Warrington; "heard it nine times — know it by heart, Hodgen."

Here the gentleman who presided at the pianoforte began to play upon his instrument, and Pen, looking in the direction of the music, beheld that very Mr. Bows, for whom he had been asking but now, and whose existence Costigan had momentarily forgotten. The little old man sate before the battered piano (which had injured its constitution wofully by sitting up so many nights, and spoke with a voice, as it were, at once hoarse and faint), and accompanied the singers, or played with taste and grace in the intervals of the songs.

Bows had seen and recollected Pen at once when the latter came into the room, and had remarked the eager warmth of the young man's recognition of Costigan. He now began to play an air, which Pen instantly remembered as one which used to be sung by the chorus of villagers in "The Stranger," just before Mrs. Haller came in. It shook Pen as he heard it. He remembered how his heart used to beat as that air was played, and before the divine Emily made her entry. Nobody, save Arthur, took any notice of old Bows's playing: it was scarcely heard amidst the clatter of knives and forks, the calls for poached eggs and kidneys, and the tramp of guests and waiters.

Pen went up and kindly shook the player by the hand at the end of his performance; and Bows greeted Arthur with great respect and cordiality. "What, you haven't forgot the old tune, Mr. Pendennis?" he said; "I thought you 'd remember it. I take it, it was the first tune of that sort you ever heard played — wasn't it, Sir? You were quite a young chap then. I fear the Captain's very bad to-night. He breaks out on a pay-day; and I shall have the deuce's own trouble in

getting home. We live together. We still hang on, Sir, in partnership, though Miss Em— though my lady Mirabel has left the firm. — And so you remember old times, do you? Wasn't she a beauty, Sir? — Your health and my service to you," — and he took a sip at the pewter measure of porter which stood by his side as he played.

Pen had many opportunities of seeing his early acquaintances afterwards, and of renewing his relations with Costigan and the old musician.

As they sate thus in friendly colloquy, men of all sorts and conditions entered and quitted the house of entertainment; and Pen had the pleasure of seeing as many different persons of his race, as the most eager observer need desire to inspect. Healthy country tradesmen and farmers, in London for their business, came and recreated themselves with the jolly singing and suppers of the Back Kitchen, — squads of young apprentices and assistants, the shutters being closed over the scene of their labours, came hither, for fresh air doubtless, — rakish young medical students, gallant, dashing, what is called "loudly" dressed, and (must it be owned?) somewhat dirty, — were here smoking and drinking, and vociferously applauding the songs; — young university bucks were to be found here, too, with that indescribable genteel simper which is only learned at the knees of Alma Mater; — and handsome young guardsmen, and florid bucks from the St. James's Street Clubs; — nay, senators English and Irish; and even members of the House of Peers.

The bass singer had made an immense hit with his song of "The Body Snatcher," and the town rushed to listen to it. A curtain drew aside, and Mr. Hodgen appeared in the character of the Snatcher, sitting on a coffin, with a flask of gin before him, with a spade, and a candle stuck in a skull. The song

was sung with a really admirable terrific humour. The singer's voice went down so low, that its grumbles rumbled into the hearer's awe-stricken soul; and in the chorus he clamped with his spade, and gave a demoniac "Hal hal!" which caused the very glasses to quiver on the table, as with terror. None of the other singers, not even Cutts himself, as that high-minded man owned, could stand up before the Snatcher, and he commonly used to retire to Mrs. Cutts's private apartments, or into the bar, before that fatal song extinguished him. Poor Cos's ditty, "The Little Dooden," which Bows accompanied charmingly on the piano, was sung but to a few admirers, who might choose to remain after the tremendous resurrectionist chant. The room was commonly emptied after that, or only left in possession of a very few and persevering votaries of pleasure.

Whilst Pen and his friend were sitting here together one night, or rather morning, two habitués of the house entered almost together. "Mr. Hoolan and Mr. Doolan," whispered Warrington to Pen, saluting these gentlemen, and in the latter Pen recognised his friend of the Alacrity coach, who could not dine with Pen on the day on which the latter had invited him, being compelled by his professional duties to decline dinner-engagements on Fridays, he had stated, with his compliments to Mr. Pendennis.

Doolan's paper, the Dawn, was lying on the table much bestained by porter, and cheek-by-jowl with Hoolan's paper, which we shall call the Day; the Dawn was liberal — the Day was ultra conservative. Many of our Journals are officered by Irish gentlemen, and their gallant brigade does the penning among us, as their ancestors used to transact the fighting in Europe; and engage under many a flag, to be good friends when the battle is over.

"Kidneys, John, and a glass of stout," says Hoolan. "How are you, Morgan? how 's Mrs. Doolan?"

"Doing pretty well, thank ye, Mick, my boy — faith she 's accustomed to it," said Doolan. "How 's the lady that owns ye? Maybe I 'll step down Sunday, and have a glass of punch, Kilburn way."

"Don't bring Patsey with you, Mick, for our Georgy 's got the measles," said the friendly Morgan, and they straightway fell to talk about matters connected with their trade — about the foreign mails — about who was correspondent at Paris, and who wrote from Madrid — about the expense the Morning Journal was at in sending couriers, about the circulation of the Evening Star, and so forth.

Warrington, laughing, took the Dawn which was lying before him, and pointed to one of the leading articles in that journal, which commenced thus —

"As rogues of note in former days who had some wicked work to perform, — an enemy to be put out of the way, a quantity of false coin to be passed, a lie to be told or a murder to be done, — employed a professional perjurer or assassin to do the work, which they were themselves too notorious or too cowardly to execute; our notorious contemporary, the 'Day,' engages smashers out of doors to utter forgeries against individuals, and calls in auxiliary cut-throats to murder the reputation of those who offend him. A black vizarded ruffian, (whom we will unmask), who signs the forged name of Trefoil, is at present one of the chief bravoës and bullies in our contemporary's establishment. He is the eunuch who brings the bowstring, and strangles at the order of the Day. We can convict this cowardly slave, and propose to do so. The charge which he has brought against Lord Bangbanagher, because he is a liberal Irish peer, and against the Board of Poor Law Guardians of the Bangbanagher Union, is," &c.

"How did they like the article at your place, Mick?" asked Morgan; "when the Captain puts his hand to it he's a tremendous hand at a smasher. He wrote the article in two hours — in — whew — you know where, while the boy was waiting."

"Our governor thinks the public don't mind a straw about these newspaper rows, and has told the Docthor to stop answering," said the other. "Them two talked it out together in my room. The Docthor would have liked a turn, for he says it's such easy writing, and requires no reading up of a subject: but the governor put a stopper on him."

"The taste for eloquence is going out, Mick," said Morgan.

"Deed then it is, Morgan," said Mick. "That was fine writing when the Docthor wrote in the Phaynix, and he and Condry Roony blazed away at each other day after day."

"And with powder and shot, too, as well as paper," says Morgan. "Faith, the Docthor was out twice, and Condry Roony winged his man."

"They are talking about Doctor Boyne and Captain Shandon," Warrington said, "who are the two Irish controversialists of the 'Dawn' and the 'Day,' Dr. Boyne being the Protestant champion, and Captain Shandon the liberal orator. They are the best friends in the world, I believe, in spite of their newspaper controversies; and though they cry out against the English for abusing their country, by Jove they abuse it themselves more in a single article than we should take the pains to do in a dozen volumes. How are you, Doolan?"

"Your servant, Mr. Warrington — Mr. Pendennis, I am delighted to have the honour of seeing ye again. The night's journey on the top of the Alacrity was one of the most agreeable I ever enjoyed in my life, and it was your liveliness and

urbanity that made the trip so charming. I have often thought over that happy night, Sir, and talked over it to Mrs. Doolan. I have seen your elegant young friend, Mr. Foker, too, here, Sir, not unfrequently. He is an occasional frequenter of this hostelry, and a right good one it is. Mr. Pendennis, when I saw you I was on the Tom and Jerry Weekly Paper; I have now the honour to be sub-editor of the Dawn, one of the best written papers of the empire" — and he bowed very slightly to Mr. Warrington. His speech was unctuous and measured, his courtesy oriental, his tone, when talking with the two Englishmen, quite different to that with which he spoke to his comrade.

"Why the devil will the fellow compliment so?" growled Warrington, with a sneer which he hardly took the pains to suppress. "Psha — who comes here? — all Parnassus is abroad to-night: here 's Archer. We shall have some fun. Well, Archer, House up?"

"Haven't been there. I have been," said Archer, with an air of mystery, "where I was wanted. Get me some supper, John — something substantial. I hate your grandees who give you nothing to eat. If it had been at Apsley House, it would have been quite different. The Duke knows what I like, and says to the Groom of the Chambers, 'Martin, you will have some cold beef, not too much done, and a pint bottle of pale ale, and some brown sherry, ready in my study as usual; Archer is coming here this evening.' The Duke doesn't eat supper himself, but he likes to see a man enjoy a hearty meal, and he knows that I dine early. A man can't live upon air, be hanged to him."

"Let me introduce you to my friend, Mr. Pendennis," Warrington said, with great gravity. "Pen, this is Mr. Archer, whom you have heard me talk about. You must know Pen's uncle, the Major, Archer, you who know everybody?"

"Dined with him the day before yesterday at Gaunt House," Archer said. "We were four — the French Ambassador, Steyne, and we two commoners."

"Why, my uncle is in Scot —" Pen was going to break out, but Warrington pressed his foot under the table as a signal for him to be quiet.

"It was about the same business that I have been to the palace to-night," Archer went on simply, "and where I've been kept four hours, in an anteroom, with nothing but yesterday's Times, which I knew by heart, as I wrote three of the leading articles myself; and though the Lord Chamberlain came in four times, and once holding the royal teacup and saucer in his hand, he did not so much as say to me, 'Archer, will you have a cup of tea?'"

"Indeed! what is in the wind now?" asked Warrington — and turning to Pen, added, "You know, I suppose, that when there is anything wrong at court they always send for Archer."

"There is something wrong," said Mr. Archer, "and as the story will be all over the town in a day or two I don't mind telling it. At the last Chantilly races, where I rode Brian Boru for my old friend the Duke de St. Cloud — the old king said to me, Archer, I'm uneasy about Saint Cloud. I have arranged his marriage with the Princess Marie Cunégonde; the peace of Europe depends upon it — for Russia will declare war if the marriage does not take place, and the young fool is so mad about Madame Massena, Marshal Massena's wife, that he actually refuses to be a party to the marriage. Well, Sir, I spoke to Saint Cloud, and having got him into pretty good humour by winning the race, and a good bit of money into the bargain, he said to me, 'Archer, tell the Governor I'll think of it.'"

"How do you say Governor in French," asked Pen, who piqued himself on knowing that language.

"Oh, we speak in English — I taught him when we were boys, and I saved his life at Twickenham, when he fell out of a punt," Archer said. "I shall never forget the Queen's looks as I brought him out of the water. She gave me this diamond ring, and always calls me Charles to this day."

"Madame Massena must be rather an old woman, Archer," Warrington said.

"Dev'lish old — old enough to be his grandmother; I told him so," Archer answered at once. "But those attachments for old women are the deuce and all. That's what the king feels: that's what shocks the poor queen so much. They went away from Paris last Tuesday night, and are living at this present moment at Jaunay's hotel."

"Has there been a private marriage, Archer?" asked Warrington.

"Whether there has or not I don't know," Mr. Archer replied; "all I know is that I was kept waiting four hours at the palace; that I never saw a man in such a state of agitation as the King of Belgium when he came out to speak to me, and that I'm devilish hungry — and here comes some supper."

"He has been pretty well to-night," said Warrington, as the pair went home together: "but I have known him in much greater force, and keeping a whole room in a state of wonder. Put aside his archery practice, that man is both able and honest — a good man of business, an excellent friend, admirable to his family as husband, father, and son."

"What is it makes him pull the long bow in that wonderful manner?"

"An amiable insanity," answered Warrington. "He never did any body harm by his talk, or said evil of any body. He

is a stout politician too, and would never write a word or do an act against his party, as many of us do."

"Of *us*! Who are *we*?" asked Pen. "Of what profession is Mr. Archer?"

"Of the Corporation of the Goosequill — of the Press, my boy," said Warrington; "of the fourth estate."

"Are you, too, of the craft, then?" Pendennis said.

"We will talk about that another time," answered the other. They were passing through the Strand as they talked, and by a newspaper office, which was all lighted up and bright. Reporters were coming out of the place, or rushing up to it in cabs; there were lamps burning in the editors' rooms, and above where the compositors were at work: the windows of the building were in a blaze of gas.

"Look at that, Pen," Warrington said. "There she is — the great engine — she never sleeps. She has her ambassadors in every quarter of the world — her couriers upon every road. Her officers march along with armies, and her envoys walk into statesmen's cabinets. They are ubiquitous. Yonder journal has an agent, at this minute, giving bribes at Madrid; and another inspecting the price of potatoes in Covent Garden. Look! here comes the Foreign Express galloping in. They will be able to give news to Downing Street to-morrow: funds will rise or fall, fortunes be made or lost; Lord B. will get up, and, holding the paper in his hand, and seeing the noble marquis in his place, will make a great speech; and — and Mr. Doolan will be called away from his supper at the Back Kitchen; for he is foreign sub-editor, and sees the mail on the newspaper sheet before he goes to his own."

And so talking, the friends turned into their chambers, as the dawn was beginning to peep.

CHAPTER X.

In which the printer's devil comes to the door.

PEN, in the midst of his revels and enjoyments, humble as they were, and moderate in cost if not in kind, saw an awful sword hanging over him which must drop down before long and put an end to his frolics and feasting. His money was very nearly spent. His club subscription had carried away a third part of it. He had paid for the chief articles of furniture with which he had supplied his little bed-room: in fine, he was come to the last five-pound note in his pocket book, and could think of no method of providing a successor: for our friend had been bred up like a young prince as yet, or as a child in arms whom his mother feeds when it cries out.

Warrington did not know what his comrade's means were. An only child, with a mother at her country house, and an old dandy of an uncle who dined with a great man every day, Pen might have a large bank at his command for anything that the other knew. He had gold chains and a dressing-case fit for a lord. His habits were those of an aristocrat, — not that he was expensive upon any particular point, for he dined and laughed over the pint of porter and the plate of beef from the cook's shop with perfect content and good appetite, ^{not} but he could not adopt the penny-wise precautions of life. He could not give twopence to a waiter; he could not refrain from taking a cab if he had a mind to do so, or if it rained, and as surely as he took the cab he overpaid the driver. He had a scorn for cleaned gloves and minor economies. Had he been bred to ten thousand a year he could scarcely have been more free-handed; and for a beggar, with a sad story, or a couple of pretty piteous-faced children, he never could resist putting his hand into his pocket. It was a sumptuous nature, perhaps,

that could not be brought to regard money; a natural generosity and kindness; and possibly a petty vanity that was pleased with praise, even with the praise of waiters and cabmen. I doubt whether the wisest of us know what our own motives are, and whether some of the actions of which we are the very proudest will not surprise us when we trace them, as we shall one day, to their source.

Warrington then did not know, and Pen had not thought proper to confide to his friend, his pecuniary history. That Pen had been wild and wickedly extravagant at college, the other was aware; every body at college was extravagant and wild; but how great the son's expenses had been, and how small the mother's means, were points which had not been as yet submitted to Mr. Warrington's examination.

At last the story came out, while Pen was grimly surveying the change for the last five-pound note, as it lay upon the tray from the public-house by Mr. Warrington's pot of ale.

"It is the last rose of summer," said Pen; "its blooming companions have gone long ago; and behold the last one of the garland has shed its leaves;" and he told Warrington the whole story which we know of his mother's means, of his own follies, of Laura's generosity; during which time Warrington smoked his pipe and listened intent.

"Inpecuniosity will do you good," Pen's friend said, knocking out the ashes at the end of the narration; "I don't know anything more wholesome for a man — for an honest man, mind you — for another, the medicine loses its effect — than a state of tick. It is an alterative and a tonic; it keeps your moral man in a perpetual state of excitement: as a man who is riding at a fence, or has his opponent's single stick before him, is forced to look his obstacle steadily in the face, and braces himself to repulse or overcome it; a little necessity brings out your pluck if you have any, and nerves you to

grapple with fortune. You will discover what a number of things you can do without when you have no money to buy them. You won't want new gloves and varnished boots, eau de Cologne, and cabs to ride in. You have been bred up as a molly-coddle, Pen, and spoilt by the women. A single man who has health and brains, and can't find a livelihood in the world, doesn't deserve to stay there. Let him pay his last half-penny and jump over Waterloo Bridge. Let him steal a leg of mutton and be transported and get out of the country — he is not fit to live in it. Dixi; I have spoken. Give us another pull at the pale ale."

"You have certainly spoken; but how is one to live?" said Pen. "There is beef and bread in plenty in England, but you must pay for it with work or money. And who will take my work? and what work can I do?"

Warrington burst out laughing. "Suppose we advertise in the Times," he said, "for an usher's place at a classical and commercial academy — A gentleman, B.A. of St. Boniface College, Oxbridge, and who was plucked for his degree —"

"Confound you," cried Pen.

"— Wishes to give lessons in classics and mathematics, and the rudiments of the French language; he can cut hair, attend to the younger pupils, and play a second on the piano with the daughters of the principal. Address A. P., Lamb Court, Temple."

"Go on," said Pen, growling.

"Men take to all sorts of professions. Why, there is your friend Bloundell — Bloundell is a professional blackleg, and travels the continent, where he picks up young gentlemen of fashion and fleeces them. There is Bob O'Toole, with whom I was at school, who drives the Ballynafad mail now, and carries honest Jack Finucane's own correspondence to that city. I know a man, Sir, a doctor's son, like — well, don't be

angry, I meant nothing offensive — a doctor's son, I say, who was walking the hospitals here, and quarreled with his governor on questions of finance, and what did he do when he came to his last five-pound note? he let his mustachios grow, went into a provincial town, where he announced himself as Professor Spineto, chiropodist to the Emperor of All the Russias, and by a happy operation on the editor of the country newspaper, established himself in practice, and lived reputably for three years. He has been reconciled to his family, and has now succeeded to his father's gallypots."

"Hang gallypots," cried Pen. "I can't drive a coach, cut corns, or cheat at cards. There's nothing else you propose."

"Yes; there's our own correspondent," Warrington said. "Every man has his secrets, look you. Before you told me the story of your money-matters, I had no idea but that you were a gentleman of fortune, for, with your confounded airs and appearance, anybody would suppose you to be so. From what you tell me about your mother's income, it is clear that you must not lay any more hands on it. You can't go on spunging upon the women. You must pay off that trump of a girl. Laura is her name? — here is your health, Laura! — and carry a hodge rather than ask for a shilling from home."

"But how earn one?" asked Pen.

"How do I live, think you?" said the other. "On my younger brother's allowance, Pendennis? I have secrets of my own, my boy;" and here Warrington's countenance fell. "I made away with that allowance five years ago: if I had made away with myself a little time before, it would have been better. I have played off my own bat, ever since. I don't want much money. When my purse is out, I go to work and fill it, and then lie idle like a serpent or an Indian, until I have digested the mass. Look, I begin to feel empty," Warrington said, and

showed Pen a long lean purse, with but a few sovereigns at one end of it.

"But how do you fill it?" said Pen.

"I write," said Warrington. "I don't tell the world that I do so," he added, with a blush. "I do not choose that questions should be asked: or, perhaps, I am an ass, and don't wish it to be said that George Warrington writes for bread. But I write in the *Law Reviews*: look here, these articles are mine." And he turned over some sheets. "I write in a newspaper now and then, of which a friend of mine is editor." And Warrington, going with Pendennis to the club one day, called for a file of the "*Dawn*," and pointed with his finger silently to one or two articles, which Pen read with delight. He had no difficulty in recognising the style afterwards — the strong thoughts and curt periods, the sense, the satire, and the scholarship.

"I am not up to this," said Pen, with a genuine admiration of his friend's powers. "I know very little about politics or history, Warrington; and have but a smattering of letters. I can't fly upon such a wing as yours."

"But you can on your own, my boy, which is lighter, and soars higher, perhaps," the other said, good-naturedly. "Those little scraps and verses which I have seen of yours show me, what is rare in these days, a natural gift, Sir. You needn't blush, you conceited young jackanapes. You have thought so yourself any time these ten years. You have got the sacred flame — a little of the real poetical fire, Sir, I think; and all our oil-lamps are nothing, compared to that, though ever so well trimmed. You are a poet, Pen, my boy," and so speaking, Warrington stretched out his broad hand, and clapped Pen on the shoulder.

Arthur was so delighted that the tears came into his eyes. "How kind you are to me, Warrington!" he said.

"I like you, old boy," said the other. "I was dev'lish lonely in chambers, and wanted somebody, and the sight of your honest face somehow pleased me. I liked the way you laughed at Lowton — that poor good little snob. And, in fine, the reason why I cannot tell — but so it is, young 'un. I'm alone in the world, Sir; and I wanted some one to keep me company;" and a glance of extreme kindness and melancholy passed out of Warrington's dark eyes.

Pen was too much pleased with his own thoughts to perceive the sadness of the friend who was complimenting him. "Thank you, Warrington," he said, "thank you for your friendship to me, and — and what you say about me. I *have* often thought I was a poet. I will be one — I think I am one, as you say so, though the world mayn't. Is it — is it the Ariadne in Naxos which you liked (I was only eighteen when I wrote it), or the Prize Poem?"

Warrington burst into a roar of laughter. "Why, you young goose," he yelled out — "of all the miserable weak rubbish I ever tried, Ariadne in Naxos is the most mawkish and disgusting. The Prize Poem is so pompous and feeble, that I 'm positively surprised, Sir, it didn't get the medal. You don't suppose that you are a serious poet, do you, and are going to cut out Milton and Æschylus? Are you setting up to be a Pindar, you absurd little tom-tit, and fancy you have the strength and pinion which the Theban eagle bear, sailing with supreme dominion through the azure fields of air? No, my boy, I think you can write a magazine article, and turn out a pretty copy of verses; that 's what I think of you."

"By Jove!" said Pen, bouncing up and stamping his foot, "I'll show you that I am a better man than you think for."

Warrington only laughed the more, and blew twenty-four puffs rapidly out of his pipe by way of reply to Pen.

An opportunity for showing his skill presented itself before very long. That eminent publisher, Mr. Bacon (formerly Bacon and Bungay) of Paternoster Row, besides being the proprietor of the *Legal Review*, in which Mr. Warrington wrote, and of other periodicals of note and gravity, used to present to the world every year a beautiful gilt volume called the *Spring Annual*, edited by the Lady Violet Lebas, and numbering amongst its contributors not only the most eminent, but the most fashionable, poets of our time. Young Lord Dodo's poems first appeared in this miscellany — the Honourable Percy Popjoy, whose chivalrous ballads have obtained him such a reputation — Bedwin Sands's *Eastern Ghazals*, and many more of the works of our young nobles were first given to the world in the *Spring Annual*, which has since shared the fate of other vernal blossoms, and perished out of the world. The book was daintily illustrated with pictures of reigning beauties, or other prints of a tender and voluptuous character; and, as these plates were prepared long beforehand, requiring much time in engraving, it was the eminent poets who had to write to the plates, and not the painters who illustrated the poems.

One day, just when this volume was on the eve of publication, it chanced that Mr. Warrington called in Paternoster Row to talk with Mr. Hack, Mr. Bacon's reader and general manager of publications — for Mr. Bacon, not having the least taste in poetry or in literature of any kind, wisely employed the services of a professional gentleman. Warrington, then, going into Mr. Hack's room on business of his own, found that gentleman with a bundle of proof plates and sheets of the *Spring Annual* before him, and glanced at some of them.

Percy Popjoy had written some verses to illustrate one of the pictures, which was called *The Church Porch*. A Spanish damsel was hastening to church with a large prayer-book;

a youth in a cloak was hidden in a niche watching this young woman. The picture was pretty: but the great genius of Percy Popjoy had deserted him, for he had made the most execrable verses which ever were perpetrated by a young nobleman.

Warrington burst out laughing as he read the poem: and Mr. Hack laughed too, but with rather a rueful face. — "It won't do," he said, "the public won't stand it. Bungay's people are going to bring out a very good book, and have set up Miss Bunyan against Lady Violet. We have most titles to be sure — but the verses are too bad. Lady Violet herself owns it; she's busy with her own poem; what's to be done? We can't lose the plate. The governor gave sixty pounds for it?"

"I know a fellow who would do some verses, I think," said Warrington. "Let me take the plate home in my pocket: and send to my chambers in the morning for the verses. You'll pay well of course."

"Of course," said Mr. Hack; and Warrington, having dispatched his own business, went home to Mr. Pen, plate in hand.

"Now boy, here's a chance for you. Turn me off a copy of verses to this."

"What's this? A Church Porch — A lady entering it, and a youth out of a wine-shop window ogling her. — What the deuce am I to do with it?"

"Try," said Warrington. "Earn your livelihood for once, you who long so to do it."

"Well, I will try," said Pen.

"And I'll go out to dinner," said Warrington, and left Mr. Pen in a brown study.

When Warrington came home that night, at a very late hour, the verses were done. "There they are," said Pen. "I've screwed 'em out at last. I think they 'll do."

"I think they will," said Warrington, after reading them; they ran as follows: —

THE CHURCH PORCH.

Although I enter not,
Yet round about the spot
Sometimes I hover,
And at the sacred gate,
With longing eyes I wait,
Expectant of her.

The Minster bell tolls out
Above the city's rout
And noise and humming:
They 've stopp'd the chiming bell,
I hear the organ's swell —
She 's coming, she 's coming!

My lady comes at last,
Timid and stepping fast,
And hastening hither,
With modest eyes downcast.
She comes — she 's here — she 's past.
May Heaven go with her!

Kneel undisturb'd, fair saint,
Pour out your praise or plaint
Meekly and duly.
I will not enter there,
To sully your pure prayer
With thoughts unruly.

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
Lingering a minute,
Like outcast spirits, who wait
And see through Heaven's gate
Angels within it.

"Have you got any more, young fellow?" asked Warrington. "We must make them give you a couple of guineas a page; and if the verses are liked, why, you 'll get an entrée into Bacon's magazines, and may turn a decent penny."

Pen examined his portfolio and found another ballad which he thought might figure with advantage in the Spring Annual, and consigning these two precious documents to Warrington, the pair walked from the Temple, to the famous haunt of the Muses and their masters, Paternoster Row. Bacon's shop was an ancient low-browed building, with a few of the books published by the firm displayed in the windows, under a bust of my Lord of Verulam, and the name of Mr. Bacon in brass on the private door. Exactly opposite to Bacon's house was that of Mr. Bungay, which was newly painted and elaborately decorated in the style of the seventeenth century, so that you might have fancied stately Mr. Evelyn passing over the threshold, or curious Mr. Pepys examining the books in the window. Warrington went into the shop of Mr. Bacon, but Pen stayed without. It was agreed that his ambassador should act for him entirely; and the young fellow paced up and down the street in a very nervous condition, until he should learn the result of the negotiation. Many a poor devil before him has trodden those flags, with similar cares and anxieties at his heels, his bread and his fame dependent upon the sentence of his magnanimous patrons of the Row. Pen looked at all the wonders of all the shops; and the strange variety of literature which they exhibit. In this were displayed black-letter volumes and books in the clear pale types of Aldus and Elzevir: in the next, you might see the Penny Horrific Register; the Halfpenny Annals of Crime and History of the most celebrated murderers of all countries, The Raff's Magazine, The Larky Swell, and other publications of the penny press; whilst at the next window, portraits of ill-favoured in-

dividuals, with fac-similes of the venerated signatures of the Reverend Grimes Wapshot, the Reverend Elias Howle, and the works written, and the sermons preached by them, showed the British Dissenter where he could find mental pabulum. Hard by would be a little casement hung with emblems, with medals and rosaries, with little paltry prints of saints gilt and painted, and books of controversial theology, by which the faithful of the Roman opinion might learn a short way to deal with Protestants, at a penny a piece, or ninepence the dozen for distribution; whilst in the very next window you might see "Come out of Rome," a sermon preached at the opening of the Shepherd's Bush College, by John Thomas Lord Bishop of Ealing. Scarce an opinion but has its expositor and its place of exhibition in this peaceful old Pater-noster Row, under the toll of the bells of Saint Paul.

Pen looked in at all the windows and shops, as a gentleman who is going to have an interview with the dentist, examines the books on the waiting-room table. He remembered them afterwards. It seemed to him that Warrington would never come out; and indeed the latter was engaged for sometime in pleading his friend's cause.

Pen's natural conceit would have swollen immensely if he could but have heard the report which Warrington gave of him. It happened that Mr. Bacon himself had occasion to descend to Mr. Hack's room whilst Warrington was talking there, and Warrington knowing Bacon's weaknesses, acted upon them with great adroitness in his friend's behalf. In the first place, he put on his hat to speak to Bacon, and addressed him from the table on which he seated himself. Bacon liked to be treated with rudeness by a gentleman, and used to pass it on to his inferiors as boys pass the mark. "What! not know Mr. Pendennis, Mr. Bacon?" Warrington said. "You can't live much in the world, or you would know him.

A man of property in the West, of one of the most ancient families in England, related to half the nobility in the empire — he's cousin to Lord Pontypool — he was one of the most distinguished men at Oxbridge; he dines at Gaunt House every week."

"Law bless me, you don't say so, Sir. Well — really — Law bless me now," said Mr. Bacon.

"I have just been showing Mr. Hack some of his verses, which he sat up last night, at my request, to write; and Hack talks about giving him a copy of the book — the what-d'-you-call-'em.

"Law bless me now, does he? The what-d'-you-call-'em. Indeed!

"'The Spring Annual' is its name, — as payment for these verses. You don't suppose that such a man as Mr. Arthur Pendennis gives up a dinner at Gaunt House for nothing? You know, as well as anybody, that the men of fashion want to be paid."

"That they do, Mr. Warrington, Sir," said the publisher.

"I tell you he's a star; he'll make a name, Sir. He's a new man, Sir."

"They've said that of so many of those young swells, Mr. Warrington," the publisher interposed, with a sigh. "There was Lord Viscount Dodo, now; I gave his Lordship a good bit of money for his poems, and only sold eighty copies. Mr. Popjoy's Hadgincourt, Sir, fell dead."

"Well, then, I'll take my man over to Bungay," Warrington said, and rose from the table. This threat was too much for Mr. Bacon, who was instantly ready to accede to any reasonable proposal of Mr. Warrington's, and finally asked his manager what those proposals were? When he heard that the negotiation only related as yet to a couple of

ballads, which Mr. Warrington offered for the Spring Annual, Mr. Bacon said, "Law bless you, give him a check directly;" and with this paper Warrington went out to his friend, and placed it, grinning, in Pen's hands. Pen was as elated as if somebody had left him a fortune. He offered Warrington a dinner at Richmond instantly. "What should he go and buy for Laura and his mother? He must buy something for them."

"They'll like the book better than anything else," said Warrington, "with the young one's name to the verses, printed among the swells."

"Thank God! thank God!" cried Arthur, "I needn't be a charge upon the old mother. I can pay off Laura now. I can get my own living. I can make my own way."

"I can marry the grand vizier's daughter: I can purchase a house in Belgrave Square; I can build a fine castle in the air!" said Warrington, pleased with the other's exultation. "Well, you may get bread and cheese, Pen: and I own it tastes well, the bread which you earn yourself."

They had a magnum of claret at dinner at the club that day, at Pen's charges. It was long since he had indulged in such a luxury, but Warrington would not baulk him: and they drank together to the health of the Spring Annual.

It never rains but it pours, according to the proverb; so very speedily another chance occurred, by which Mr. Pen was to be helped in his scheme of making a livelihood. Warrington one day threw him a letter across the table, which was brought by a printer's boy, "from Captain Shandon, Sir" — the little emissary said: and then went and fell asleep on his accustomed bench in the passage. He paid many a subsequent visit there, and brought many a message to Pen.

"F. P. Tuesday Morning.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Bungay will be here to-day, about the 'Pall-Mall Gazette.' You would be the very man to help us *with a genuine West-end article*. — you understand — dashing, trenchant, and d— aristocratic. Lady Hipshaw will write; but she's not much you know, and we've two lords; but the less they do the better. We must have you. We'll give you your own terms, and we'll make a hit with the 'Gazette.'

"Shall B. come and see you, or can you look in upon me here?

"Ever yours,

"C. S."

"Some more opposition," Warrington said, when Pen had read the note. "Bungay and Bacon are at daggers drawn; each married the sister of the other, and they were for some time the closest friends and partners. Hack says it was Mrs. Shandon, who reads for Bungay a good deal, says Mrs. Bacon did the business; but I don't know which is right, Peachum or Lockit. But since they have separated, it is a furious war between the two publishers; and no sooner does one bring out a book of travels, or poems, a magazine or periodical, quarterly, or monthly, or weekly, or annual, but the rival is in the field with something similar. I have heard poor Shandon tell with great glee how he made Bungay give a grand dinner at Blackwall to all his writers, by saying that Bacon had invited his corps to an entertainment at Greenwich. When Bungay engaged your celebrated friend Mr. Wagg to edit the 'Londoner,' Bacon straightway rushed off and secured Mr. Grindle to give his name to the 'Westminster Magazine.' When Bacon brought out his comic Irish novel of 'Barney

Brallaghan, off went Bungay to Dublin, and produced his rollicking Hibernian story of 'Looney Mac Twolter.' When Doctor Hicks brought out his 'Wanderings in Mesopotamia' under Bacon's auspices, Bungay produced Professor Sandiman's 'Researches in Zahara;' and Bungay is publishing his 'Pall-Mall Gazette' as a counterpoise to Bacon's 'Whitehall Review.' Let us go and hear about the 'Gazette.' There may be a place for you in it, Pen, my boy. We will go and see Shandon. We are sure to find him at home."

"Where does he live?" asked Pen.

"In the Fleet Prison," Warrington said. "And very much at home he is there, too. He is the king of the place."

Pen had never seen this scene of London life, and walked with no small interest in at the grim gate of that dismal edifice. They went through the ante-room, where the officers and janitors of the place were seated, and passing in at the wicket, entered the prison. The noise and the crowd, the life and the shouting, the shabby bustle of the place, struck and excited Pen. People moved about ceaselessly and restless, like caged animals in a menagerie. Men were playing at fives. Others pacing and tramping: this one in colloquy with his lawyer in dingy black — that one walking sadly, with his wife by his side, and a child on his arm. Some were arrayed in tattered dressing-gowns, and had a look of rakish fashion. Everybody seemed to be busy, humming, and on the move. Pen felt as if he choked in the place, and as if the door being locked upon him they never would let him out.

They went through a court up a stone-staircase, and through passages full of people, and noise, and cross lights, and black doors clapping and banging; — Pen feeling as one does in a feverish morning-dream. At last the same little runner who had brought Shandon's note, and had followed them down Fleet Street munching apples, and who showed

the way to the two gentlemen through the prison, said, "This is the Captain's door," and Mr. Shandon's voice from within bade them enter.

The room, though bare, was not uncheerful. The sun was shining in at the window — near which sate a lady at work, who had been gay and beautiful once, but in whose faded face kindness and tenderness still beamed. Through all his errors and reckless mishaps and misfortunes, this faithful creature adored her husband, and thought him the best and cleverest, as indeed he was one of the kindest of men. Nothing ever seemed to disturb the sweetness of his temper; not debts: not duns: not misery: not the bottle: not his wife's unhappy position, or his children's ruined chances. He was perfectly fond of wife and children after his fashion: he always had the kindest words and smiles for them, and ruined them with the utmost sweetness of temper. He never could refuse himself or any man any enjoyment which his money could purchase; he would share his last guinea with Jack and Tom, and we may be sure he had a score of such retainers. He would sign his name at the back of any man's bill, and never pay any debt of his own. He would write on any side, and attack himself or another man with equal indifference. He was one of the wittiest, the most amiable, and the most incorrigible of Irishmen. Nobody could help liking Charley Shandon who saw him once, and those whom he ruined could scarcely be angry with him.

When Pen and Warrington arrived, the Captain (he had been in an Irish militia regiment once, and the title remained with him) was sitting on his bed in a torn dressing-gown, with a desk on his knees, at which he was scribbling as fast as his rapid pen could write. Slip after slip of paper fell off the desk wet on to the ground. A picture of his children was

hung up over his bed, and the youngest of them was pattering about the room.

Opposite the Captain sate Mr. Bungay, a portly man of stolid countenance, with whom the little child had been trying a conversation.

"Papa's a very clever man," said she; "mamma says so."

"Oh, very," said Mr. Bungay.

"And you 're a very rich man, Mr. Bundy," cried the child, who could hardly speak plain.

"Mary!" said Mamma, from her work.

"Oh, never mind," Bungay roared out with a great laugh; "no harm in saying I'm rich — he, he — I am pretty well off, my little dear."

"If you 're rich, why don't you take papa out of piz'n?" asked the child.

Mamma at this began to wipe her eyes with the work on which she was employed. (The poor lady had hung curtains up in the room, had brought the childrens' picture and placed it there, and had made one or two attempts to ornament it). Mamma began to cry; Mr. Bungay turned red, and looked fiercely out of his bloodshot little eyes; Shandon's pen went on, and Pen and Warrington arrived with their knock.

Captain Shandon looked up from his work. "How do you do, Mr. Warrington," he said. "I'll speak to you in a minute. Please sit down, gentlemen, if you can find places," and away went the pen again.

Warrington pulled forward an old portmanteau — the only available seat — and sate down on it with a bow to Mrs. Shandon, and a nod to Bungay: the child came and looked at Pen solemnly: and in a couple of minutes the swift scribbling ceased; and Shandon, turning the desk over on the bed, stooped and picked up the papers.

"I think this will do," said he. "It's the prospectus for the 'Pall-Mall Gazette.'"

"And here's the money for it," Mr. Bungay said, laying down a five-pound note. "I'm as good as my word, I am. When I say I'll pay, I pay."

"Faith that's more than some of us can say," said Shandon, and he eagerly clapped the note into his pocket.

CHAPTER XI.

Which is passed in the neighbourhood of Ludgate Hill.

OUR imprisoned Captain announced, in smart and emphatic language in his prospectus, that the time had come at last when it was necessary for the gentlemen of England to band together in defence of their common rights and their glorious order, menaced on all sides by foreign revolutions, by intestine radicalism, by the artful calumnies of mill-owners and cotton-lords, and the stupid hostility of the masses whom they gulled and led. "The ancient monarchy was insulted," the Captain said, "by a ferocious republican rabble. The Church was deserted by envious dissent, and undermined by stealthy infidelity. The good institutions, which had made our country glorious, and the name of English Gentleman the proudest in the world, were left without defence, and exposed to assault and contumely from men to whom no sanctuary was sacred, for they believed in nothing holy; no history venerable, for they were too ignorant to have heard of the past; and no law was binding which they were strong enough to break, when their leaders gave the signal for plunder. It was because the kings of France mistrusted their gentlemen," Mr. Shandon remarked, "that the monarchy of Saint Louis went down: it was because the people of England

still believed in their gentlemen, that this country encountered and overcame the greatest enemy a nation ever met: it was because we were headed by gentlemen that the Eagles retreated before us from the Douro to the Garonne: it was a gentleman who broke the line at Trafalgar, and swept the plain of Waterloo."

Bungay nodded his head in a knowing manner, and winked his eyes when the Captain came to the Waterloo passage: and Warrington burst out laughing.

"You see how our venerable friend Bungay is affected," Shandon said, slyly looking up from his papers — "that's your true sort of test. I have used the Duke of Wellington and the battle of Waterloo a hundred times: and I never knew the Duke to fail."

The Captain then went on to confess, with much candour, that up to the present time the gentlemen of England, confident of their right, and careless of those who questioned it, had left the political interest of their order as they did the management of their estates, or the settlement of their legal affairs, to persons affected to each peculiar service, and had permitted their interests to be represented in the press by professional proctors and advocates. That time Shandon professed to consider was now gone by: the gentlemen of England must be their own champions: the declared enemies of their order were brave, strong, numerous, and uncompromising. They must meet their foes in the field: they must not be belied and misrepresented by hireling advocates: they must not have Grub Street publishing Gazettes from Whitehall; "that's a dig at Bacon's people, Mr. Bungay," said Shandon, turning round to the publisher.

Bungay clapped his stick on the floor. "Hang him, pitch into him, Captaining," he said with exultation: and turning to Warrington, wagged his dull head more vehemently than ever,

and said, "For a slashing article, Sir, there's nobody like the Capting — no-obody like him."

The prospectus-writer went on to say that some gentlemen, whose names were, for obvious reasons, not brought before the public (at which Mr. Warrington began to laugh again), had determined to bring forward a journal, of which the principles were so and so. "These men are proud of their order, and anxious to uphold it," cried out Captain Shandon, flourishing his paper with a grin. "They are loyal to their Sovereign, by faithful conviction and ancestral allegiance; they love their Church, where they would have their children worship, and for which their forefathers bled; they love their country, and would keep it what the gentlemen of England — yes, *the gentlemen of England* (we'll have that in large caps., Bungay, my boy) have made it — the greatest and freest in the world: and as the names of some of them are appended to the deed which secured our liberties at Runnymede —"

"What's that?" asked Mr. Bungay.

"An ancestor of mine sealed it with his sword-hilt," Pen said, with great gravity.

"It's the Habeas Corpus, Mr. Bungay," Warrington said, on which the publisher answered, "All right, I dare say," and yawned, though he said, "Go on, Capting."

— "at Runnymede; they are ready to defend that freedom to-day with sword and pen, and now, as then, to rally round the old laws and liberties of England."

"Brayvo!" cried Warrington. The little child stood wondering; the lady was working silently, and looking with fond admiration. "Come here, little Mary," said Warrington, and patted the child's fair curls with his large hand. But she shrank back from his rough caress, and preferred to go and take refuge at Pen's knee, and play with his fine watch-

chain: and Pen was very much pleased that she came to him; for he was very soft-hearted and simple, though he concealed his gentleness under a shy and pompous demeanour. So she clambered up on his lap, whilst her father continued to read his programme.

"You were laughing," the Captain said to Warrington, "about, 'the obvious reasons' which I mentioned. Now, I'll show ye what they are, ye unbelieving heathen. 'We have said,'" he went on, "that we cannot give the names of the parties engaged in this undertaking, and that there were obvious reasons for that concealment. We number influential friends in both Houses of the Senate, and have secured allies in every diplomatic circle in Europe. Our sources of intelligence are such as cannot, by any possibility, be made public — and, indeed, such as no other London or European journal could, by any chance, acquire. But this we are free to say, that the very earliest information connected with the movement of English and Continental politics, will be found ONLY in the columns of the 'Pall Mall Gazette.' The Statesman and the Capitalist, the Country Gentleman, and the Divine, will be amongst our readers, because our writers are amongst them. We address ourselves to the higher circles of society: we care not to disown it — the 'Pall Mall Gazette' is written by gentlemen for gentlemen; its conductors speak to the classes in which they live and were born. The field-preacher has his journal, the radical free-thinker has his journal: why should the Gentlemen of England be unrepresented in the Press?"

Mr. Shandon then went on with much modesty to descant upon the literary and fashionable departments of the "Pall Mall Gazette," which were to be conducted by gentlemen of acknowledged reputation; men famous at the Universities (at which Mr. Pendennis could scarcely help laughing and blush-

ing), known at the Clubs, and of the Society which they described. He pointed out delicately to advertisers that there would be no such medium as the "Pall Mall Gazette" for giving publicity to their sales; and he eloquently called upon the nobility of England, the baronetage of England, the revered clergy of England, the bar of England, the matrons, the daughters, the homes and hearths of England, to rally round the good old cause; and Bungay at the conclusion of the reading woke up from a second snooze in which he had indulged himself, and again said it was all right.

The reading of the prospectus concluded, the gentlemen present entered into some details regarding the political and literary management of the paper, and Mr. Bungay sate by listening and nodding his head, as if he understood what was the subject of their conversation, and approved of their opinions. Bungay's opinions, in truth, were pretty simple. He thought the Captain could write the best smashing article in England. He wanted the opposition house of Bacon smashed, and it was his opinion that the Captain could do that business. If the Captain had written a letter of Junius on a sheet of paper, or copied a part of the Church Catechism, Mr. Bungay would have been perfectly contended, and have considered that the article was a smashing article. And he pocketed the papers with the greatest satisfaction: and he not only paid for the MS., as we have seen, but he called little Mary to him, and gave her a penny as he went away.

The reading of the manuscript over, the party engaged in general conversation, Shandon leading with a jaunty fashionable air in compliment to the two guests who sate with him, and who, by their appearance and manner, he presumed to be persons of the *beau monde*. He knew very little indeed of the great world, but he had seen it, and made the most of what he had seen. He spoke of the characters of the day, and

great personages of the fashion, with easy familiarity and jocular allusions, as if it was his habit to live amongst them. He told anecdotes of their private life, and of conversations he had had, and entertainments at which he had been present, and at which such and such a thing occurred. Pen was amused to hear the shabby prisoner in a tattered dressing-gown talking glibly about the great of the land. Mrs. Shandon was always delighted when her husband told these tales, and believed in them fondly every one. She did not want to mingle in the fashionable world herself, she was not clever enough; but the great Society was the very place for her Charles: he shone in it: he was respected in it. Indeed, Shandon had once been asked to dinner by the Earl of X; his wife treasured the invitation-card in her work-box at that very day.

Mr. Bungay presently had enough of this talk and got up to take leave, whereupon Warrington and Pen rose to depart with the publisher, though the latter would have liked to stay to make a further acquaintance with this family, who interested him and touched him. He said something about hoping for permission to repeat his visit, upon which Shandon, with a rueful grin, said he was always to be found at home, and should be delighted to see Mr. Pennington.

"I'll see you to my park-gate, gentlemen," said Captain Shandon, seizing his hat, in spite of a deprecatory look, and a faint cry of "Charles" from Mrs. Shandon. And the Captain, in shabby slippers, shuffled out before his guests, leading the way through the dismal passages of the prison. His hand was already fiddling with his waistcoat pocket, where Bungay's five-pound note was, as he took leave of the three gentlemen at the wicket; one of them, Mr. Arthur Pendennis, being greatly relieved when he was out of the horrid place, and again freely treading the flags of Farringdon-street.

Mrs. Shandon sadly went on with her work at the window looking into the court. She saw Shandon with a couple of men at his heels run rapidly in the direction of the prison tavern. She had hoped to have had him to dinner herself that day, there was a piece of meat, and some salad in a basin, on the ledge outside of the window of their room, which she had expected that she and little Mary were to share with the child's father. But there was no chance of that now. He would be in that tavern until the hours for closing it; then he would go and play at cards or drink in some other man's room, and come back silent, with glazed eyes, reeling a little on his walk, that his wife might nurse him. Oh, what varieties of pain do we not make our women suffer!

So Mrs. Shandon went to the cupboard, and, in lieu of a dinner, made herself some tea. And in those varieties of pain of which we spoke anon, what a part of confidante has that poor tea-pot played ever since the kindly plant was introduced among us! What myriads of women have cried over it, to be sure! What sick beds it has smoked by! What fevered lips have received refreshment from out of it! Nature meant very gently by women when she made that tea-plant; and with a little thought what a series of pictures and groups the fancy may conjure up and assemble round the tea-pot and cup. Melissa and Sacharissa are talking love secrets over it. Poor Polly has it and her lover's letters upon the table; his letters who was her lover yesterday, and when it was with pleasure, not despair, she wept over them. Mary comes tripping noiselessly into her mother's bed-room, bearing a cup of the consoler to the widow who will take no other food. Ruth is busy concocting it for her husband, who is coming home from the harvest field — one could fill a page with hints for such pictures; — finally, Mrs. Shandon and little Mary sit down and drink their tea together, while the Captain goes

out and takes his pleasure. She cares for nothing else but that, when her husband is away.

A gentleman with whom we are already slightly acquainted, Mr. Jack Finucane, a townsman of Captain Shandon's, found the Captain's wife and little Mary (for whom Jack always brought a sweetmeat in his pocket) over this meal. Jack thought Shandon the greatest of created geniuses, had had one or two helps from the good-natured prodigal, who had always a kind word, and sometimes a guinea for any friend in need; and never missed a day in seeing his patron. He was ready to run Shandon's errands and transact his money-business with publishers and newspaper editors, duns, creditors, holders of Shandon's acceptances, gentlemen disposed to speculate in those securities, and to transact the thousand little affairs of an embarrassed Irish gentleman. I never knew an embarrassed Irish gentleman yet, but he had an aid-de-camp of his own nation, likewise in circumstances of pecuniary discomfort. That aid-de-camp has subordinates of his own, who again may have other insolvent dependents — all through his life our Captain marched at the head of a ragged staff, who shared in the rough fortunes of their chieftain.

"He won't have that five-pound note very long, I bet a guinea," Mr. Bungay said of the Captain, as he and his two companions walked away from the prison; and the publisher judged rightly, for when Mrs. Shandon came to empty her husband's pockets, she found but a couple of shillings, and a few half-pence out of the morning's remittance. Shandon had given a pound to one follower; had sent a leg of mutton and potatoes and beer to an acquaintance in the poor side of the prison; had paid an outstanding bill at the tavern where he had changed his five-pound note; had had a dinner with two friends there, to whom he lost sundry half-crowns at

cards afterwards; so that the night left him as poor as the morning had found him.

The publisher and the two gentlemen had had some talk together after quitting Shandon, and Warrington reiterated to Bungay what he had said to his rival, Bacon, viz., that Pen was a high fellow, of great genius, and what was more, well with the great world, and related to "no end" of the peerage. Bungay replied that he should be happy to have dealings with Mr. Pendennis, and hoped to have the pleasure of seeing both gents to cut mutton with him before long, and so, with mutual politeness and protestations, they parted.

"It is hard to see such a man as Shandon," Pen said, musing, and talking that night over the sight which he had witnessed, "of accomplishments so multifarious, and of such an undoubted talent and humour, an inmate of a gaol for half his time, and a bookseller's hanger-on when out of prison."

"I am a bookseller's hanger-on — you are going to try your paces as a hack," Warrington said with a laugh. "We are all hacks upon some road or other. I would rather be myself, than Paley our neighbour in chambers: who has as much enjoyment of his life as a mole. A deuced deal of undeserved compassion has been thrown away upon what you call your bookseller's drudge."

"Much solitary pipes and ale make a cynic of you," Pen said. "You are a Diogenes by a beer-barrel, Warrington. No man shall tell me that a man of genius, as Shandon is, ought to be driven by such a vulgar slave driver, as yonder Mr. Bungay, whom we have just left, who fattens on the profits of the other's brains, and enriches himself out of his journeyman's labour. It makes me indignant to see a gentleman the serf of such a creature as that, of a man who can't

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profession. I protest against that wretch of a middle-man whom I see between Genius and his great landlord, the Public, and who stops more than half of the labourer's earnings and fame."

"I am a prose labourer," Warrington said; "you, my boy, are a poet in a small way, and so, I suppose, consider you are authorised to be flighty. What is it you want? Do you want a body of capitalists that shall be forced to purchase the works of all authors, who may present themselves, manuscript in hand? Everybody who writes his epic, every driveller who can or can't spell, and produces his novel or his tragedy, — are they all to come and find a bag of sovereigns in exchange for their worthless reams of paper? Who is to settle what is good or bad, saleable or otherwise? Will you give the buyer leave, in fine, to purchase or not? Why, Sir, when Johnson sate behind the screen at Saint John's Gate, and took his dinner apart, because he was too shabby and poor to join the literary bigwigs who were regaling themselves round Mr. Cave's best table-cloth, the tradesman was doing him no wrong. You couldn't force the publisher to recognise the man of genius in the young man who presented himself before him, ragged, gaunt, and hungry. Rags are not a proof of genius; whereas capital is absolute, as times go, and is perforce the bargain-master. It has a right to deal with the literary inventor as with any other; — if I produce a novelty in the book trade, I must do the best I can with it; but I can no more force Mr. Murray to purchase my book of travels or sermons, than I can compel Mr. Tattersall to give me a hundred guineas for my horse. I may have my own ideas of the value of my Pegasus, and think him the most wonderful of animals; but the dealer has a right to his opinion, too, and may want a lady's horse, or a cob for a heavy timid rider, or a sound hack for the road, and my beast won't suit him."

"You deal in metaphors, Warrington," Pen said; "but you rightly say that you are very prosaic. Poor Shandon! There is something about the kindness of that man, and the gentleness of that sweet creature of a wife, which touches me profoundly. I like him, I am afraid, better than a better man."

"And so do I," Warrington said. "Let us give him the benefit of our sympathy, and the pity that is due to his weakness: though I fear that sort of kindness would be resented as contempt by a more high-minded man. You see he takes his consolation along with his misfortune, and one generates the other or balances it, as is the way of the world. He is a prisoner, but he is not unhappy."

"His genius sings within his prison bars," Pen said.

"Yes," Warrington said, bitterly; "Shandon accommodates himself to a cage pretty well. He ought to be wretched, but he has Jack and Tom to drink with, and that consoles him: he might have a high place, but, as he can't, why he can drink with Tom and Jack; — he might be providing for his wife and children, but Thomas and John have got a bottle of brandy which they want him to taste; — he might pay poor Snip, the tailor, the twenty pounds which the poor devil wants for his landlord, but John and Thomas lay their hands upon his purse; — and so he drinks whilst his tradesman goes to gaol and his family to ruin. Let us pity the misfortunes of genius, and conspire against the publishing tyrants who oppress men of letters."

"What! are you going to have another glass of brandy-and-water?" Pen said, with a humorous look. It was at the Back Kitchen that the above philosophical conversation took place between the two young men.

Warrington began to laugh as usual. "*Video meliora*

proboque — I mean, bring it me hot, with sugar, John," he said to the waiter.

"I would have some more, too, only I don't want it," said Pen. "It does not seem to me, Warrington, that we are much better than our neighbours." And Warrington's last glass having been dispatched, the pair returned to their chambers.

They found a couple of notes in the letter-box, on their return, which had been sent by their acquaintance of the morning, Mr. Bungay. That hospitable gentleman presented his compliments to each of the gentlemen, and requested the pleasure of their company at dinner on an early day, to meet a few literary friends.

"We shall have a grand spread, Warrington. We shall meet all Bungay's corps."

"All except poor Shandon," said Pen, nodding a good night to his friend, and he went into his own little room. The events and acquaintances of the day had excited him a good deal, and he lay for some time awake thinking over them, as Warrington's vigorous and regular snore from the neighbouring apartment pronounced that that gentleman was engaged in deep slumber.

Is it true, thought Pendennis, lying on his bed and gazing at a bright moon without, that lighted up a corner of his dressing-table, and the frame of a little sketch of Fair Oaks drawn by Laura, that hung over his drawers — is it true that I am going to earn my bread at last, and with my pen? that I shall impoverish the dear mother no longer; and that I may gain a name and reputation in the world, perhaps? These are welcome if they come, thought the young visionary, laughing and blushing to himself, though alone and in the night, as he thought how dearly he would relish honour and fame

if they could be his. If fortune favours me, I laud her; if she frowns, I resign her. I pray Heaven I may be honest if I fail, or if I succeed. I pray Heaven I may tell the truth as far as I know it: that I mayn't swerve from it through flattery, or interest, or personal enmity, or party prejudice. Dearest old mother, what a pride will you have, if I can do anything worthy of our name! and you, Laura, you won't scorn me as the worthless idler and spendthrift, when you see that I — when I have achieved a — psha! what an Alnaschar I am because I have made five pounds by my poems, and am engaged to write half a dozen articles for a newspaper. He went on with these musings, more happy and hopeful, and in a humbler frame of mind, than he had felt to be for many a day. He thought over the errors and idleness, the passions, extravagancies, disappointments, of his wayward youth: he got up from the bed: threw open the window, and looked out into the night: and then, by some impulse, which we hope was a good one, he went up and kissed the picture of Fair Oaks, and flinging himself down on his knees by the bed, remained for some time in that posture of hope and submission. When he rose, it was with streaming eyes. He had found himself repeating, mechanically, some little words which he had been accustomed to repeat as a child at his mother's side, after the saying of which she would softly take him to his bed and close the curtains round him, hushing him with a benediction.

The next day, Mr. Pidgeon, their attendant, brought in a large brown paper parcel, directed to G. Warrington, Esq., with Mr. Trotter's compliments, and a note which Warrington read.

"Pen, you beggar!" roared Warrington to Pen, who was in his own room.

"Hullo!" sung out Pen.

"Come here, you're wanted," cried the other, and Pen came out. "What is it?" said he.

"*Catch!*" cried Warrington, and flung the parcel at Pen's head, who would have been knocked down had he not caught it.

"It's books for review for the '*Pall Mall Gazette*:' pitch into 'em," Warrington said. As for Pen, he never had been so delighted in his life: his hand trembled as he cut the string of the packet, and beheld within a smart set of new neat calico-bound books, travels, and novels, and poems.

"Sport the oak, Pidgeon," said he. "I'm not at home to any body to-day." And he flung into his easy chair, and hardly gave himself time to drink his tea, so eager was he to begin to read and to review.

CHAPTER XII.

In which the history still hovers about Fleet Street.

CAPTAIN SHANDON, urged on by his wife, who seldom meddled in business matters, had stipulated that John Finucane, Esquire, of the Upper Temple, should be appointed sub-editor of the forthcoming "*Pall Mall Gazette*," and this post was accordingly conferred upon Mr. Finucane by the spirited proprietor of the Journal. Indeed he deserved any kindness at the hands of Shandon, so fondly attached was he, as we have said, to the Captain and his family, and so eager to do him a service. It was in Finucane's chambers that Shandon used in former days to hide when danger was near and bailiffs abroad: until at length his hiding-place was known, and the sheriff's officers came as regularly to wait for the Captain on Finucane's stair-case as at his own door. It was to Finucane's chambers that poor Mrs. Shandon came often and often to explain her troubles and griefs, and devise

means of rescue for her adored Captain. Many a meal did Finucane furnish for her and the child there. It was an honour to his little rooms to be visited by such a lady; and as she went down the stair-case with her veil over her face, Fin would lean over the balustrade looking after her, to see that no Temple Lovelace assailed her upon the road, perhaps hoping that some rogue might be induced to waylay her, so that he, Fin, might have the pleasure of rushing to her rescue, and breaking the rascal's bones. It was a sincere pleasure to Mrs. Shandon when the arrangements were made by which her kind honest champion was appointed her husband's aid-de-camp in the newspaper.

He would have sate with Mrs. Shandon as late as the prison hours permitted, and had indeed many a time witnessed the putting to bed of little Mary, who occupied a crib in the room; and to whose evening prayers that God might bless papa, Finucane, although of the Romish faith himself, had said Amen with a great deal of sympathy — but he had an appointment with Mr. Bungay regarding the affairs of the paper which they were to discuss over a quiet dinner. So he went away at six o'clock from Mrs. Shandon, but made his accustomed appearance at the Fleet Prison next morning, having arrayed himself in his best clothes and ornaments, which, though cheap as to cost, were very brilliant as to colour and appearance, and having in his pocket four pounds two shillings, being the amount of his week's salary at the Daily Journal, minus two shillings expended by him in the purchase of a pair of gloves on his way to the prison.

He had cut his mutton with Mr. Bungay, as the latter gentleman phrased it, and Mr. Trotter, Bungay's reader and literary man of business, at Dick's Coffee-House on the previous day, and entered at large into his views respecting the conduct of the "Pall-Mall Gazette." In a masterly

manner he had pointed out what should be the sub-editorial arrangements of the paper: what should be the type for the various articles: who should report the markets; who the turf and ring; who the Church intelligence; and who the fashionable chit-chat. He was acquainted with gentlemen engaged in cultivating these various departments of knowledge, and in communicating them afterwards to the public—in fine, Jack Finucane was, as Shandon had said of him, and, as he proudly owned himself to be, one of the best sub-editors of a paper in London. He knew the weekly earnings of every man connected with the Press, and was up to a thousand dodges, or ingenious economic contrivances, by which money could be saved to spirited capitalists, who were going to set up a paper. He at once dazzled and mystified Mr. Bungay, who was slow of comprehension, by the rapidity of the calculations which he exhibited on paper, as they sate in the box. And Bungay afterwards owned to his subordinate Mr. Trotter, that that Irishman seemed a clever fellow.

And now having succeeded in making this impression upon Mr. Bungay, the faithful fellow worked round to the point which he had very near at heart, viz., the liberation from prison of his admired friend and chief, Captain Shandon. He knew to a shilling the amount of the detainers which were against the Captain at the porter's lodge of the Fleet; and, indeed, professed to know all his debts, though this was impossible, for no man in England, certainly not the Captain himself, was acquainted with them. He pointed out what Shandon's engagements already were; and how much better he would work if removed from confinement; (though this Mr. Bungay denied, for, "when the Captain's locked up," he said, "we are sure to find him at home; whereas, when he's free, you can never catch hold of him";) finally, he so worked on Mr. Bungay's feelings, by describing Mrs. Shandon

pining away in the prison, and the child sickening there, that the publisher was induced to promise that, if Mrs. Shandon would come to him in the morning, he would see what could be done. And the colloquy ending at this time with the second round of brandy-and-water, although Finucane, who had four guineas in his pocket, would have discharged the tavern reckoning with delight, Bungay said, "No, Sir,—this is my affair, Sir, if you please. James, take the bill, and eighteenpence for yourself;" and he handed over the necessary funds to the waiter. Thus it was that Finucane, who went to bed at the Temple after the dinner at Dick's, found himself actually with his week's salary intact upon Saturday morning.

He gave Mrs. Shandon a wink so knowing and joyful, that that kind creature knew some good news was in store for her, and hastened to get her bonnet and shawl, when Fin asked if he might have the honour of taking her a walk, and giving her a little fresh air. And little Mary jumped for joy at the idea of this holyday, for Finucane never neglected to give her a toy, or to take her to a show, and brought newspaper orders in his pocket for all sorts of London diversions to amuse the child. Indeed, he loved them with all his heart, and would cheerfully have dashed out his rambling brains to do them, or his adored Captain, a service,

"May I go, Charley? or shall I stay with you, for you're poorly, dear, this morning? He's got a headache, Mr. Finucane. He suffers from headaches, and I persuaded him to stay in bed," Mrs. Shandon said.

"Go along with you, and Polly. Jack, take care of'em. Hand me over the Burton's Anatomy, and leave me to my abominable devices," Shandon said, with perfect good humour. He was writing, and not uncommonly took his Greek and Latin quotations (of which he knew the use as a public writer) from that wonderful repertory of learning.

So Fin gave his arm to Mrs. Shandon, and Mary went skipping down the passages of the prison, and through the gate into the free air. From Fleet Street to Paternoster Row is not very far. As the three reached Mr. Bungay's shop, Mrs. Bungay was also entering at the private door, holding in her hand a paper parcel and a manuscript volume bound in red, and, indeed, containing an account of her transactions with the butcher in the neighbouring market. Mrs. Bungay was in a gorgeous shot silk dress, which flamed with red and purple; she wore a yellow shawl, and had red flowers inside her bonnet, and a brilliant light blue parasol. Mrs. Shandon was in an old black watered silk; her bonnet had never seen very brilliant days of prosperity any more than its owner, but she could not help looking like a lady whatever her attire was. The two women curtsied to each other, each according to her fashion.

"I hope you're pretty well, Mum?" said Mrs. Bungay.

"It's a very fine day," said Mrs. Shandon.

"Won't you step in, Mum?" said Mrs. Bungay, looking so hard at the child as almost to frighten her.

"I — I came about business with Mr. Bungay — I — I hope he's pretty well?" said timid Mrs. Shandon.

"If you go to see him in the counting-house, couldn't you — couldn't you leave your little *gurl* with me?" said Mrs. Bungay, in a deep voice, and with a tragic look, as she held out one finger towards the child.

"I want to stay with mamma," cried little Mary, burying her face in her mother's dress.

"Go with this lady, Mary, my dear," said the mother.

"I'll show you some pretty pictures," said Mrs. Bungay, with the voice of an ogress, "and some nice things besides; look here" — and opening her brown paper parcel, Mrs.

Bungay displayed some choice sweet biscuits, such as her Bungay loved after his wine. Little Mary followed after this attraction, the whole party entering at the private entrance, from which a side door led into Mr. Bungay's commercial apartments. Here, however, as the child was about to part from her mother, her courage again failed her, and again she ran to the maternal petticoat; upon which the kind and gentle Mrs. Shandon, seeing the look of disappointment in Mrs. Bungay's face, good-naturedly said, "If you will let me, I will come up too, and sit for a few minutes," and so the three females ascended the stairs together. A second biscuit charmed little Mary into perfect confidence, and in a minute or two she prattled away without the least restraint.

Faithful Finucane meanwhile found Mr. Bungay in a severer mood than he had been on the night previous, when two-thirds of a bottle of port, and two large glasses of brandy-and-water, had warmed his soul into enthusiasm, and made him generous in his promises towards Captain Shandon. His impetuous wife had rebuked him on his return home. She had ordered that he should give no relief to the Captain; he was a good-for-nothing fellow, whom no money would help; she disapproved of the plan of the "Pall Mall Gazette," and expected that Bungay would only lose his money in it as they were losing over the way (she always called her brother's establishment "over the way,") by the "Whitehall Journal." Let Shandon stop in prison and do his work; it was the best place for him. In vain Finucane pleaded and promised and implored, for his friend Bungay had had an hour's lecture in the morning and was inexorable.

But what honest Jack failed to do below stairs in the counting-house, the pretty faces and manners of the mother and child were effecting in the drawing-room, where they were melting the fierce but really soft Mrs. Bungay. There

was an artless sweetness in Mrs. Shandon's voice, and a winning frankness of manner, which made most people fond of her, and pity her: and taking courage by the rugged kindness with which her hostess received her, the Captain's lady told her story, and described her husband's goodness and virtues, and her child's failing health (she was obliged to part with two of them, she said, and send them to school, for she could not have them in that horrid place) — that Mrs. Bungay, though as grim as Lady Macbeth, melted under the influence of the simple tale, and said she would go down and speak to Bungay. Now in this household to speak was to command, with Mrs. Bungay; and with Bungay, to hear was to obey.

It was just when poor Finucane was in despair about his negotiation, that the majestic Mrs. Bungay descended upon her spouse, politely requested Mr. Finucane to step up to his friends in her drawing-room, while she held a few minutes' conversation with Mr. B., and when the pair were alone the publisher's better half informed him of her intentions towards the Captain's lady.

"What 's in the wind now, my dear?" Mæcenas asked, surprised at his wife's altered tone. "You wouldn't hear of my doing anything for the Captain this morning: I wonder what has been a changing of you."

"The Capting is an Irishman," Mrs. Bungay replied; "and those Irish I have always said I couldn't abide. But his wife is a lady, as any one can see; and a good woman, and a clergyman's daughter, and a West of England woman, B., which I am myself, by my mother's side — and, O Marmaduke! didn't you remark her little gurl?"

"Yes, Mrs. B., I saw the little girl."

"And didn't you see how like she was to our angel, Bessy, Mr. B.?" — and Mrs. Bungay's thoughts flew back to a period

eighteen years back, when Bacon and Bungay had just set up in business as small booksellers in a country town, and when she had had a child, named Bessy, something like the little Mary who had just moved her compassion.

"Well, well, my dear," Mr. Bungay said, seeing the little eyes of his wife begin to twinkle and grow red; "the Captain ain't in for much. There's only a hundred and thirty pound against him. Half the money will take him out of the Fleet, Finucane says, and we'll pay him half salaries till he has made the account square. When the little 'un said, 'Why don't you take Par out of pizn?' I did feel it, Elizabeth, upon my honour I did, now." And the upshot of this conversation was, that Mr. and Mrs. Bungay both ascended to the drawing-room, and Mr. Bungay made a heavy and clumsy speech, in which he announced to Mrs. Shandon, that, hearing sixty-five pounds would set her husband free, he was ready to advance that sum of money, deducting it from the Captain's salary, and that he would give it to her on condition that she would personally settle with the creditors regarding her husband's liberation.

I think this was the happiest day that Mrs. Shandon and Mr. Finucane had had for a long time. "Bedad, Bungay, you're a trump!" roared out Fin, in an overpowering brogue and emotion. "Give us your fist, old boy: and won't we send the 'Pall Mall Gazette' up to ten thousand a-week, that's all!" and he jumped about the room, and tossed up little Mary, with a hundred frantic antics.

"If I could drive you anywhere in my carriage, Mrs. Shandon — I'm sure it's quite at your service," Mrs. Bungay said, looking out at a one-horsed vehicle which had just driven up, and in which this lady took the air considerably — and the two ladies, with little Mary between them, (whose tiny hand Mæcenas's wife kept fixed in her great grasp), with the de-

lighted Mr. Finucane on the back seat, drove away from Paternoster Row, as the owner of the vehicle threw triumphant glances at the opposite windows at Bacon's.

"It won't do the Captain any good," thought Bungay, going back to his desk and accounts, "but Mrs. B. becomes regular upset when she thinks about her misfortune. The child would have been of age yesterday, if she'd lived. Bessy told me so:" and he wondered how women did remember things.

We are happy to say that Mrs. Shandon sped with very good success upon her errand. She who had had to mollify creditors when she had no money at all, and only tears and entreaties wherewith to soothe them, found no difficulty in making them relent by means of a bribe of ten shillings in the pound; and the next Sunday was the last, for some time at least, which the Captain spent in prison.

CHAPTER XIII.

A dinner in the Row.

UPON the appointed day our two friends made their appearance at Mr. Bungay's door in Paternoster Row; not the public entrance through which bookseller's boys issued with their sacks full of Bungay's volumes, and around which timid aspirants lingered with their virgin manuscripts ready for sale to Sultan Bungay, but at the private door of the house, whence the splendid Mrs. Bungay would come forth to step into her chaise and take her drive, settling herself on the cushions, and casting looks of defiance at Mrs. Bacon's opposite windows — at Mrs. Bacon, who was as yet a chaiseless woman.

On such occasions, when very much wroth at her sister-in-law's splendour, Mrs. Bacon would fling up the sash of her

drawing-room window, and look out with her four children at the chaise, as much as to say, "Look at these four darlings. Flora Bungay! This is why I can't drive in my carriage; you would give a coach and four to have the same reason." And it was with these arrows out of her quiver that Emma Bacon shot Flora Bungay as she sate in her chariot envious and childless.

As Pen and Warrington came to Bungay's door, a carriage and a cab drove up to Bacon's. Old Dr. Slocum descended heavily from the first; the Doctor's equipage was as ponderous as his style, but both had a fine sonorous effect upon the publishers in the Row. A couple of dazzling white waistcoats stepped out of the cab.

Warrington laughed. "You see Bacon has his dinner party too. That is Dr. Slocum, author of 'Memoirs of the Poisoners.' You would hardly have recognised our friend Hoolan in that gallant white waistcoat. Doolan is one of Bungay's men, and, faith, here he comes. Indeed Messrs. Hoolan and Doolan had come from the Strand in the same cab, tossing up by the way which should pay the shilling; and Mr. D. stepped from the other side of the way, arrayed in black, with a large pair of white gloves which were spread out on his hands, and which the owner could not help regarding with pleasure.

The house porter in an evening coat, and gentlemen with gloves as large as Doolan's, but of the famous Berlin web, were on the passage of Mr. Bungay's house to receive the guests' hats and coats, and bawl their names up the stair. Some of the latter had arrived when the three new visitors made their appearance; but there was only Mrs. Bungay in red satin and a turban to represent her own charming sex. She made curtsies to each new comer as he entered the drawing-room, but her mind was evidently pre-occupied by

extraneous thoughts. The fact is, Mrs. Bacon's dinner party was disturbing her, and as soon as she had received each individual of her own company, Flora Bungay flew back to the embrasure of the window, whence she could rake the carriages of Emma Bacon's friends as they came rattling up the Row. The sight of Dr. Slocum's large carriage, with the gaunt job-horses, crushed Flora: none but hack cabs had driven up to her own door on that day.

They were all literary gentlemen, though unknown as yet to Pen. There was Mr. Bole, the real editor of the magazine, of which Mr. Wagg was the nominal chief; Mr. Trotter, who, from having broken out on the world as a poet of a tragic and suicidal cast, had now subsided into one of Mr. Bungay's back shops as reader for that gentleman; and Captain Sumph, an ex-beau still about town, and related in some indistinct manner to Literature and the Peerage. He was said to have written a book once, to have been a friend of Lord Byron, to be related to Lord Sumphington; in fact, anecdotes of Byron formed his staple, and he seldom spoke but with the name of that poet or some of his contemporaries in his mouth, as thus: "I remember poor Shelley at school being sent up for good for a copy of verses, every line of which I wrote, by Jove;" or, "I recollect, when I was at Missolonghi with Byron, offering to bet Gamba," and so forth. This gentleman, Pen remarked, was listened to with great attention by Mrs. Bungay; his anecdotes of the aristocracy, of which he was a middle-aged member, delighted the publisher's lady; and he was almost a greater man than the great Mr. Wagg himself in her eyes. Had he but come in his own carriage, Mrs. Bungay would have made her Bungay purchase any given volume from his pen.

Mr. Bungay went about to his guests as they arrived, and did the honours of his house with much cordiality. "How are

you, Sir? Fine day, Sir. Glad to see you year, Sir. Flora, my love, let me ave the honour of introducing Mr. Warrington to you. Mr. Warrington, Mrs. Bungay; Mr. Pendennis, Mrs. Bungay. Hope you 've brought good appetites with you, gentlemen. *You*, Doolan, I know ave, for you 've always ad a deuce of a twist."

"Lor, Bungay!" said Mrs. Bungay.

"Faith, a man must be hard to please, Bungay, who can't eat a good dinner in *this* house," Doolan said, and he winked and stroked his lean chops with his large gloves; and made appeals of friendship to Mrs. Bungay, which that honest woman refused with scorn from the timid man. "She couldn't abide that Doolan," she said in confidence to her friends. Indeed, all his flatteries failed to win her.

As they talked, Mrs. Bungay surveying mankind from her window, a magnificent vision of an enormous grey cab-horse appeared, and neared rapidly. A pair of white reins, held by small white gloves, were visible behind it; a face pale, but richly decorated with a chin-tuft, the head of an exiguous groom bobbing over the cab-head — these bright things were revealed to the delighted Mrs. Bungay. "The Honourable Percy Popjoy's quite punctual, I declare," she said, and sailed to the door to be in waiting at the nobleman's arrival.

"It 's Percy Popjoy," said Pen, looking out of window, and seeing an individual, in extremely lacquered boots, descend from the swinging cab: and, in fact, it was that young nobleman — Lord Falconet's eldest son, as we all very well know, who was come to dine with the publisher — his publisher of the Row.

"He was my fag at Eton," Warrington said. "I ought to have licked him a little more." He and Pen had had some bouts at the Oxbridge Union debates, in which Pen had had very much the better of Percy: who presently appeared, with

his hat under his arm, and a look of indescribable good humour and fatuity in his round dimpled face: upon which Nature had burst out with a chin-tuft, but, exhausted with the effort, had left the rest of the countenance bare of hair.

The temporary groom of the chambers bawled out, "The Honourable Percy Popjoy," much to that gentleman's discomposure at hearing his titles announced.

"What did the man want to take away my hat for, Bungay?" he asked of the publisher. "Can't do without my hat — want it to make my bow to Mrs. Bungay. How well you look, Mrs. Bungay, to-day. Haven't seen your carriage in the Park: why haven't you been there? I missed you; indeed, I did."

"I'm afraid you're a sad quiz," said Mrs. Bungay.

"Quiz! Never made a joke in my — hullo! who's here? How d'ye do, Pendennis? How d'ye do, Warrington? These are old friends of mine, Mrs. Bungay. I say, how the doose did *you* come here?" he asked of the two young men, turning his lacquered heels upon Mrs. Bungay, who respected her husband's two young guests, now that she found they were intimate with a lord's son.

"What! do *they* know him?" she asked rapidly of Mr. B.

"High fellers, I tell you — the young one related to all the nobility," said the publisher; and both ran forward, smiling and bowing, to greet almost as great personages as the young lord — no less characters, indeed, than the great Mr. Wenham and the great Mr. Wagg, who were now announced.

Mr. Wenham entered, wearing the usual demure look and stealthy smile with which he commonly surveyed the tips of his neat little shining boots, and which he but seldom brought to bear upon the person who addressed him. Wagg's white waistcoat, spread out, on the contrary, with profuse brilliancy; his burly, red face shone resplendent over it, lighted up with

the thoughts of good jokes and a good dinner. He liked to make his *entrée* into a drawing-room with a laugh, and, when he went away at night, to leave a joke exploding behind him. No personal calamities or distresses (of which that humourist had his share in common with the unjocular part of mankind) could altogether keep his humour down. Whatever his griefs might be, the thought of a dinner rallied his great soul; and when he saw a lord, he saluted him with a pun.

Wenham went up, then, with a smug smile and whisper, to Mrs. Bungay, and looked at her from under his eyes, and showed her the tips of his shoes. Wagg said she looked charming, and pushed on straight at the young nobleman, whom he called Pop; and to whom he instantly related a funny story, seasoned with what the French call *gros sel*. He was delighted to see Pen, too, and shook hands with him, and slapped him on the back cordially; for he was full of spirits and good humour. And he talked in a loud voice about their last place and occasion of meeting at Baymouth; and asked how their friends of Clavering Park were, and whether Sir Francis was not coming to London for the season; and whether Pen had been to see Lady Rockminster, who had arrived — fine old lady, Lady Rockminster! These remarks Wagg made not for Pen's ear so much as for the edification of the company, whom he was glad to inform that he paid visits to gentlemen's country seats, and was on intimate terms with the nobility.

Wenham also shook hands with our young friend — all of which scenes Mrs. Bungay remarked with respectful pleasure, and communicated her ideas to Bungay, afterwards, regarding the importance of Mr. Pendennis — ideas by which Pen profited much more than he was aware.

Pen, who had read, and rather admired some of her works, (and expected to find in Miss Bunion a person somewhat

resembling her own description of herself in the "Passion-Flower," in which she stated that her youth resembled —

"A violet, shrinking meanly
When blows the March wind keenly;
A timid fawn, on wild-wood lawn,
Where oak-boughs rustle greenly, —"

and that her maturer beauty was something very different, certainly, to the artless loveliness of her prime, but still exceedingly captivating and striking,) beheld, rather to his surprise and amusement, a large and bony woman in a crumpled satin dress, who came creaking into the room with a step as heavy as a grenadier's. Wagg instantly noted the straw which she brought in at the rumpled skirt of her dress, and would have stooped to pick it up: but Miss Bunion disarmed all criticism by observing this ornament herself, and, putting her own large foot upon it, so as to separate it from her robe, she stopped and picked up the straw, saying to Mrs. Bungay, that she was very sorry to be a little late, but that the omnibus was very slow, and what a comfort it was to get a ride all the way from Brompton for sixpence. Nobody laughed at the poetess's speech, it was uttered so simply. Indeed, the worthy woman had not the least notion of being ashamed of an action incidental upon her poverty.

"Is that 'Passion-Flowers?'" Pen said to Wenham, by whom he was standing. "Why her picture in the volume represents her as a very well-looking young woman."

"You know passion-flowers, like all others, will run to seed," Wenham said; "Miss Bunion's portrait was probably painted some years ago."

"Well, I like her for not being ashamed of her poverty."

"So do I," said Mr. Wenham, who would have starved rather than have come to dinner in an omnibus, "but I don't

think that she need flourish the straw about, do you, Mr. Pendennis? My dear Miss Bunion, how do you do? I was in a great lady's drawing-room this morning, and everybody was charmed with your new volume. Those lines on the christening of Lady Fanny Fantail brought tears into the Duchess's eyes. I said that I thought I should have the pleasure of meeting you to-day, and she begged me to thank you, and say how greatly she was pleased."

This history, told in a bland smiling manner, of a Duchess whom Wenham had met that very morning, too, quite put poor Wagg's dowager and baronet out of court, and placed Wenham beyond Wagg as a man of fashion. Wenham kept this inestimable advantage, and having the conversation to himself, ran on with a number of anecdotes regarding the aristocracy. He tried to bring Mr. Popjoy into the conversation by making appeals to him, and saying. "I was telling your father this morning," or, "I think you were present at W. house the other night when the Duke said so and so," but Mr. Popjoy would not gratify him by joining in the talk, preferring to fall back into the window recess with Mrs. Bungay, and watch the cabs that drove up to the opposite door. At least, if he would not talk, the hostess hoped that those odious Bacons would see how she had secured the noble Percy Popjoy for her party.

And now the bell of Saint Paul's tolled half an hour later than that for which Mr. Bungay had invited his party, and it was complete with the exception of two guests, who at last made their appearance, and in whom Pen was pleased to recognise Captain and Mrs. Shandon.

When these two had made their greetings to the master and mistress of the house, and exchanged nods of more or less recognition with most of the people present, Pen and Warrington went up and shook hands very warmly with Mrs.

Shandon, who, perhaps, was affected to meet them, and think where it was she had seen them but a few days before. Shandon was brushed up, and looked pretty smart, in a red velvet waistcoat, and a frill, into which his wife had stuck her best brooch. In spite of Mrs. Bungay's kindness, perhaps in consequence of it, Mrs. Shandon felt great terror and timidity in approaching her: indeed, she was more awful than ever in her red satin and bird of paradise, and it was not until she had asked in her great voice about the dear little gurl, that the latter was somewhat encouraged, and ventured to speak.

"Nice-looking woman," Popjoy whispered to Warrington. "Do introduce me to Captain Shandon, Warrington. I'm told he's a tremendous clever fellow; and, dammy, I adore intellect, by Jove I do!" This was the truth: Heaven had not endowed young Mr. Popjoy with much intellect of his own, but had given him a generous faculty for admiring, if not for appreciating, the intellect of others. "And introduce me to Miss Bunion. I'm told she's very clever too. She's rum to look at, certainly, but that don't matter. Dammy, I consider myself a literary man, and I wish to know all the clever fellows." So Mr. Popjoy and Mr. Shandon had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with one another; and now the doors of the adjoining dining-room being flung open, the party entered and took their seats at table. Pen found himself next to Bunion on one side, and to Mr. Wagg — the truth is, Wagg fled alarmed from the vacant place by the poetess, and Pen was compelled to take it.

The gifted being did not talk much during dinner, but Pen remarked that she ate, with a vast appetite, and never refused any of the supplies of wine which were offered to her by the butler. Indeed, Miss Bunion having considered Mr. Pen-dennis for a minute, who gave himself rather grand airs, and

who was attired in an extremely fashionable style, with his very best chains, shirt studs, and cambric fronts, was set down, and not without reason, as a prig by the poetess; who thought it was much better to attend to her dinner than to take any notice of him. She told him as much in after days with her usual candour. "I took you for one of the little Mayfair dandies," she said to Pen. "You looked as solemn as a little undertaker; and as I disliked, beyond measure, the odious creature who was on the other side of me, I thought it was best to eat my dinner and hold my tongue."

"And you did both very well, my dear Miss Bunion," Pen said with a laugh.

"Well, so I do, but I intend to talk to you the next time a great deal: for you are neither so solemn, nor so stupid, nor so pert as you look."

"Ah, Miss Bunion, how I pine for that 'next time' to come," Pen said with an air of comical gallantry: — But we must return to the day, and the dinner at Paternoster Row.

The repast was of the richest description — "What I call of the florid Gothic style," Wagg whispered to Pen, who sate beside the humourist, in his side-wing voice. The men in creaking shoes and Berlin gloves were numerous and solemn, carrying on rapid conversations behind the guests, as they moved to and fro with the dishes. Doolan called out, "Waither," to one of them, and blushed when he thought of his blunder. Mrs. Bungay's own footboy was lost amidst those large and black-coated attendants.

"Look at that *very* bow-windowed man," Wagg said. "He's an undertaker in Amen Corner, and attends funerals and dinners. Cold meat and hot, don't you perceive? He's the sham butler here, and I observe, my dear Mr. Pendennis, as you will through life, that wherever there is a sham butler

at a London dinner there is sham wine — this sherry is filthy. Bungay, my boy, where did you get this delicious brown sherry?"

"I'm glad you like it, Mr. Wagg; glass with you," said the publisher. "It's some I got from Alderman Benning's store, and gave a good figure for it, I can tell you. Mr. Pendennis, will you join us? Your 'ealth, gentlemen."

"The old rogue, where does he expect to go to? It came from the public house," Wagg said. "It requires two men to carry off that sherry, 't is so uncommonly strong. I wish I had a bottle of old Steyne's wine here, Pendennis: your uncle and I have had many a one. He sends it about to people where he is in the habit of dining. I remember at poor Rawdon Crawley's, Sir Pitt Crawley's brother — he was Governor of Coventry Island — Steyne's chef always came in the morning, and the butler arrived with the champagne from Gaunt House, in the ice-pails ready."

"How good this is!" said Popjoy, good-naturedly. "You must have a *cordons bleu* in your kitchen."

"O yes," Mrs. Bungay said, thinking he spoke of a jack-chain very likely.

"I mean a French chef," said the polite guest.

"O yes, your lordship," again said the lady.

"Does your artist say he's a Frenchman, Mrs. B.?" called out Wagg.

"Well, I'm sure I don't know," answered the publisher's lady.

"Because, if he does, he's a *quizzin yer*," cried Mr. Wagg; but nobody saw the pun, which disconcerted somewhat the bashful punster. "The dinner is from Griggs, in St. Paul's Church-yard; so is Bacon's," he whispered to Pen. "Bungay writes to give half-a-crown a head more than Bacon, — so does Bacon. They would poison each other's ices if

they could get near them; and as for the made-dishes — they are poison. This — hum — ha — this *Brimborion à la Sévigné* is delicious, Mrs. B.," he said, helping himself to a dish which the undertaker handed to him.

"Well, I'm glad you like it," Mrs. Bungay answered, blushing, and not knowing whether the name of the dish was actually that which Wagg gave to it, but dimly conscious that that individual was quizzing her. Accordingly she hated Mr. Wagg with female ardour; and would have deposed him from his command over Mr. Bungay's periodical, but that his name was great in the trade, and his reputation in the land considerable.

By the displacement of persons, Warrington had found himself on the right hand of Mrs. Shandon, who sate in plain black silk and faded ornaments by the side of the florid publisher. The sad smile of the lady moved his rough heart to pity. Nobody seemed to interest himself about her: she sate looking at her husband, who himself seemed rather abashed in the presence of some of the company. Wenham and Wagg both knew him and his circumstances. He had worked with the latter, and was immeasurably his superior in wit, genius, and acquirement; but Wagg's star was brilliant in the world, and poor Shandon was unknown there. He could not speak before the noisy talk of the coarser and more successful man; but drank his wine in silence, and as much of it as the people would give him. He was under *surveillance*. Bungay had warned the undertaker not to fill the Captain's glass too often or too full. It was a melancholy precaution that, and the more melancholy that it was necessary. Mrs. Shandon, too, cast alarmed glances across the table to see that her husband did not exceed.

Abashed by the failure of his first pun, for he was impudent and easily disconcerted, Wagg kept his conversation pretty

much to Pen during the rest of dinner, and of course chiefly spoke about their neighbours. "This is one of Bungay's grand field-days," he said. "We are all Bungavians here. — Did you read Popjoy's novel? It was an old magazine story written by poor Buzzard years ago, and forgotten here until Mr. Trotter (that is Trotter with the large shirt collar) fished it out and bethought him that it was applicable to the late elopement; so Bob wrote a few chapters *à propos* — Popjoy permitted the use of his name, and I dare say supplied a page here and there — and 'Desperation, or the Fugitive Duchess' made its appearance. The great fun is to examine Popjoy about his own work, of which he doesn't know a word. — I say, Popjoy, what a capital passage that is in Volume Three, — where the Cardinal in disguise, after being converted by the Bishop of London, proposes marriage to the Duchess's daughter."

"Glad you like it," Popjoy answered; "it's a favourite bit of my own."

"There's no such thing in the whole book," whispered Wagg to Pen. "Invented it myself. Gad! it wouldn't be a bad plot for a high-church novel."

"I remember poor Byron, Hobhouse, Trelawney, and myself, dining with Cardinal Mezzocaldo, at Rome," Captain Sumph began, "and we had some Orvieto wine for dinner, which Byron liked very much. And I remember how the Cardinal regretted that he was a single man. We went to Civita Vecchia two days afterwards, where Byron's yacht was — and, by Jove, the Cardinal died within three weeks; and Byron was very sorry, for he rather liked him."

"A devilish interesting story, indeed," Wagg said.

"You should publish some of those stories, Captain Sumph, you really should. Such a volume would make our friend Bungay's fortune," Shandon said.

"Why don't you ask Sumph to publish 'em in your new paper — the what-dye-call'em — hay, Shandon," bawled out Wagg.

"Why don't you ask him to publish 'em in your old magazine, the Thingumbob?" Shandon replied.

"Is there going to be a new paper?" asked Wenham, who knew perfectly well; but was ashamed of his connection with the press.

"Bungay going to bring out a paper?" cried Popjoy, who, on the contrary, was proud of his literary reputation and acquaintances. "You must employ me. Mrs. Bungay, use your influence with him, and make him employ me. Prose or verse — what shall it be? Novels, poems, travels, or leading articles, begad. Anything or everything — only let Bungay pay me, and I'm ready — I am now, my dear Mrs. Bungay, begad now."

"It's to be called the 'Small Beer Chronicle,'" growled Wagg, "and little Popjoy is to be engaged for the infantine department."

"It is to be called the 'Pall-Mall Gazette,' Sir, and we shall be very happy to have you with us," Shandon said.

"'Pall-Mall Gazette' — why 'Pall-Mall Gazette?'" asked Wagg.

"Because the editor was born at Dublin, the sub-editor at Cork, because the proprietor lives in Paternoster Row, and the paper is published in Catharine-street, Strand. Won't that reason suffice you, Wagg?" Shandon said; he was getting rather angry. "Everything must have a name. My dog Ponto has got a name. You've got a name, and a name which you deserve, more or less, bedad. Why d'ye grudge the name to our paper?"

"By any other name it would smell as sweet," said Wagg.

"I'll have ye remember its name's not what-dye-call'em, Mr. Wagg," said Shandon. "You know its name well enough, and — and you know mine."

"And I know your address too," said Wagg, but this was spoken in an under-tone, and the good-natured Irishman was appeased almost in an instant after his ebullition of spleen, and asked Wagg to drink wine with him in a friendly voice.

When the ladies retired from the table, the talk grew louder still; and presently Wenham, in a courtly speech, proposed that everybody should drink to the health of the new Journal, eulogising highly the talents, wit, and learning, of its editor, Captain Shandon. It was his maxim never to lose the support of a newspaper man, and in the course of that evening, he went round and saluted every literary gentleman present with a privy compliment specially addressed to him; informing this one how great an impression had been made in Downing-street by his last article, and telling that one how profoundly his good friend, the Duke of So and So, had been struck by the ability of the late numbers.

The evening came to a close, and in spite of all the precautions to the contrary, poor Shandon reeled in his walk, and went home to his new lodgings, with his faithful wife by his side, and the cabman on his box jeering at him. Wenham had a chariot of his own, which he put at Popjoy's seat; and the timid Miss Bunion seeing Mr. Wagg, who was her neighbour, about to depart, insisted upon a seat in his carriage, much to that gentleman's discomfiture.

Pen and Warrington walked home together in the moonlight. "And now," Warrington said, "that you have seen the men of letters, tell me, was I far wrong in saying that there are thousands of people in this town, who don't write books, who are, to the full, as clever and intellectual as people who do?"

Pen was forced to confess that the literary personages with whom he had become acquainted had not said much, in the course of the night's conversation, that was worthy to be remembered or quoted. In fact, not one word about literature had been said during the whole course of the night: — and it may be whispered to those uninitiated people who are anxious to know the habits and make the acquaintance of men of letters, that there are no race of people who talk about books, or, perhaps, who read books, so little as literary men.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Pall Mall Gazette.

CONSIDERABLE success at first attended the new journal. It was generally stated, that an influential political party supported the paper; and great names were cited amongst the contributors to its columns. Was there any foundation for these rumours? We are not at liberty to say whether they were well or ill founded; but this much we may divulge, that an article upon foreign policy, which was generally attributed to a noble Lord, whose connection with the Foreign Office is very well known, was in reality composed by Captain Shandon, in the parlour of the Bear and Staff public-house near Whitehall Stairs, whither the printer's boy had tracked him, and where a literary ally of his, Mr. Bludyer, had a temporary residence; and that a series of papers on finance questions, which were universally supposed to be written by a great Statesman of the House of Commons, were in reality composed by Mr. George Warrington of the Upper Temple.

That there may have been some dealings between the "Pall Mall Gazette" and this influential party, is very possible. Percy Popjoy, (whose father, Lord Falconet, was a member

of the party) might be seen not unfrequently ascending the stairs to Warrington's chambers; and some information appeared in the paper which gave it a character, and could only be got from very peculiar sources. Several poems, feeble in thought, but loud and vigorous in expression, appeared in the "Pall Mall Gazette," with the signature of "P. P."; and it must be owned that his novel was praised in the new journal in a very outrageous manner.

In the political department of the paper Mr. Pen did not take any share; but he was a most active literary contributor. The "Pall Mall Gazette" had its offices, as we have heard, in Catherine Street, in the Strand, and hither Pen often came with his manuscripts in his pocket, and with a great deal of bustle and pleasure; such as a man feels at the outset of his literary career, when to see himself in print is still a novel sensation, and he yet pleases himself to think that his writings are creating some noise in the world.

Here it was that Mr. Jack Finuance, the sub-editor, compiled with paste and scissors the Journal of which he was supervisor. With an eagle eye he scanned all the paragraphs of all the newspapers which had anything to do with the world of fashion over which he presided. He didn't let a death or a dinner-party of the aristocracy pass without having the event recorded in the columns of his Journal; and from the most recondite provincial prints, and distant Scotch and Irish newspapers, he fished out astonishing paragraphs and intelligence regarding the upper classes of society. It was a grand, nay, a touching sight, for a philosopher, to see Jack Finucane, Esquire, with a plate of meat from the cookshop, and a glass of porter from the public-house, for his meal, recounting the feasts of the great, as if he had been present at them; and in tattered trowsers and dingy shirt sleeves, cheerfully describing and arranging the most brilliant *fêtes*

of the world of fashion. The incongruity of Finucane's avocation, and his manners and appearance, amused his new friend Pen. Since he left his own native village, where his rank probably was not very lofty, Jack had seldom seen any society but such as used the parlour of the taverns which he frequented, whereas from his writing you would have supposed that he dined with ambassadors, and that his common lounge was the bow-window of White's. Errors of description, it is true, occasionally slipped from his pen; but the "Ballinacree Sentinel," of which he was own correspondent, suffered by these, not the "Pall Mall Gazette," in which Jack was not permitted to write much, his London chiefs thinking that the scissors and the paste were better wielded by him than the pen.

Pen took a great deal of pains with the writing of his reviews, and having a pretty fair share of desultory reading, acquired in the early years of his life, an eager fancy and a keen sense of fun, his articles pleased his chief and the public, and he was proud to think that he deserved the money which he earned. We may be sure that the "Pall Mall Gazette" was taken in regularly at Fairoaks, and read with delight by the two ladies there. It was received at Clavering Park, too, where we know there was a young lady of great literary tastes; and old Doctor Portman himself, to whom the widow sent her paper after she had got her son's articles by heart, signified his approval of Pen's productions, saying that the lad had spirit, taste, and fancy, and wrote, if not like a scholar, at any rate like a gentleman.

And what was the astonishment and delight of our friend Major Pendennis, on walking into one of his clubs, the Regent, where Wenham, Lord Falconet, and some other gentlemen of good reputation and fashion were assembled, to hear them one day talking over a number of the "Pall Mall Gazette,"

and of an article which appeared in its columns, making some bitter fun of a book recently published by the wife of a celebrated member of the opposition party. The book in question was a *Book of Travels in Spain and Italy*, by the Countess of Muffborough, in which it was difficult to say which was the most wonderful, the French or the English, in which languages her ladyship wrote indifferently, and upon the blunders of which the critic pounced with delighted mischief. The critic was no other than Pen: he jumped and danced round about his subject with the greatest jocularly and high spirits: he showed up the noble lady's faults with admirable mock gravity and decorum. There was not a word in the article which was not polite and gentlemanlike; and the unfortunate subject of the criticism was scarified and laughed at during the operation. Wenham's bilious countenance was puckered up with malign pleasure as he read the critique. Lady Muffborough had not asked him to her parties during the last year. Lord Falconet giggled and laughed with all his heart; Lord Muffborough and he had been rivals ever since they began life; and these complimented Major Pendennis, who until now had scarcely paid any attention to some hints which his Fair Oaks correspondence threw out of "dear Arthur's constant and severe literary occupations, which I fear may undermine the poor boy's health," and had thought any notice of Mr. Pen and his newspaper connections quite below his dignity as a Major and a gentleman.

But when the oracular Wenham praised the boy's production; when Lord Falconet, who had had the news from Percy Popjoy, approved of the genius of young Pen; when the great Lord Steyne himself, to whom the Major referred the article, laughed and sniggered over it, swore it was capital, and that the Muffborough would writhe under it, like a whale under a harpoon, the Major, as in duty bound, began

to admire his nephew very much, said, "By gad, the young rascal had some stuff in him, and would do something; he had always said he would do something;" and with a hand quite tremulous with pleasure, the old gentleman sate down to write to the widow at Fair Oaks all that the great folks had said in praise of Pen; and he wrote to the young rascal, too, asking when he would come and eat a chop with his old uncle, and saying that he was commissioned to take him to dinner at Gaunt House, for Lord Steyne liked anybody who could entertain him, whether by his folly, wit, or by his dulness, by his oddity, affectation, good spirits, or any other quality. Pen flung his letter across the table to Warrington: perhaps he was disappointed that the other did not seem to be much affected by it.

The courage of young critics is prodigious: they clamber up to the judgment seat, and, with scarce a hesitation, give their opinion upon works the most intricate or profound. Had Macaulay's History or Herschel's Astronomy been put before Pen at this period, he would have looked through the volumes, meditated his opinion over a cigar, and signified his august approval of either author, as if the critic had been their born superior and indulgent master and patron. By the help of the Biographie Universelle or the British Museum, he would be able to take a rapid *résumé* of a historical period, and allude to names, dates, and facts, in such a masterly, easy way, as to astonish his mamma at home, who wondered where her boy could have acquired such a prodigious store of reading, and himself, too, when he came to read over his articles two or three months after they had been composed, and when he had forgotten the subject and the books which he had consulted. At that period of his life Mr. Pen owns, that he would not have hesitated, at twenty-four hours' notice, to pass an opinion upon the greatest scholars, or to give a judgment upon the

Encyclopædia. Luckily he had Warrington to laugh at him and to keep down his impertinence by a constant and wholesome ridicule, or he might have become conceited beyond all sufferance; for Shandon liked the dash and flippancy of his young *aide-de-camp*, and was, indeed, better pleased with Pen's light and brilliant flashes, than with the heavier metal which his elder co-adjutor brought to bear.

But though he might justly be blamed on the score of impertinence and a certain prematurity of judgment, Mr. Pen was a perfectly honest critic; a great deal too candid for Mr. Bungay's purposes, indeed, who grumbled sadly at his impartiality. Pen and his chief, the Captain, had a dispute upon this subject one day. "In the name of common sense, Mr. Pendennis," Shandon asked, "what have you been doing — praising one of Mr. Bacon's books? Bungay has been with me in a fury this morning, at seeing a laudatory article upon one of the works of the odious firm over the way."

Pen's eyes opened with wide astonishment. "Do you mean to say," he asked, "that we are to praise no books that Bacon publishes: or that, if the books are good, we are to say they are bad?"

"My good young friend — for what do you suppose a benevolent publisher undertakes a critical journal, to benefit his rival?" Shandon inquired.

"To benefit himself certainly, but to tell the truth too," Pen said — "*ruat cælum*, to tell the truth."

"And my prospectus," said Shandon, with a laugh and a sneer; "do you consider that was a work of mathematical accuracy of statement?"

"Pardon me, that is not the question," Pen said; "and I don't think you very much care to argue it. I had some qualms of conscience about that same prospectus, and debated the matter with my friend Warrington. We agreed, however,"

Pen said, laughing, "that because the prospectus was rather declamatory and poetical, and the giant was painted upon the show-board rather larger than the original, who was inside the caravan; we need not be too scrupulous about this trifling inaccuracy, but might do our part of the show, without loss of character or remorse of conscience. We are the fiddlers, and play our tunes only; you are the showman."

"And leader of the van," said Shandon. "Well, I am glad that your conscience gave you leave to play for us."

"Yes, but," said Pen, with a fine sense of the dignity of his position, "we are all party men in England, and I will stick to my party like a Briton. I will be as good-natured as you like to our own side, he is a fool who quarrels with his own nest; and I will hit the enemy as hard as you like — but with fair play, Captain, if you please. One can't tell all the truth, I suppose; but one can tell nothing but the truth; and I would rather starve, by Jove, and never earn another penny by my pen" (this redoubted instrument had now been in use for some six weeks, and Pen spoke of it with vast enthusiasm and respect) "than strike an opponent an unfair blow, or, if called upon to place him, rank him below his honest desert."

"Well, Mr. Pendennis, when we want Bacon smashed, we must get some other hammer to do it," Shandon said, with fatal good-nature; and very likely thought within himself, "A few years hence perhaps the young gentleman won't be so squeamish." The veteran Condottiere himself was no longer so scrupulous. He had fought and killed on so many a side for many a year past, that remorse had long left him. "Gad," said he, "you've a tender conscience, Mr. Pendennis. It's the luxury of all novices, and I may have had one once myself; but that sort of bloom wears off with the rubbing of the world, and I'm not going to the trouble myself of putting on

an artificial complexion, like our pious friend Wenham, or our model of virtue, Wagg."

"I don't know whether some people's hypocrisy is not better, Captain, than other's cynicism."

"It's more profitable, at any rate," said the Captain, biting his nails. "That Wenham is as dull a quack as ever quacked: and you see the carriage in which he drove to dinner. 'Faith, it'll be a long time before Mrs. Shandon will take a drive in her own chariot. God help her, poor thing!" And Pen went away from his chief, after their little dispute and colloquy, pointing his own moral to the Captain's tale, and thinking to himself, "Behold this man, stored with genius, wit, learning, and a hundred good natural gifts: see how he has wrecked them, by paltering with his honesty, and forgetting to respect himself. Wilt thou remember thyself, O Pen? thou art conceited enough! Wilt thou sell thy honour for a bottle? No, by heaven's grace, we will be honest, whatever befalls, and our mouths shall only speak the truth when they open."

A punishment, or, at least, a trial, was in store for Mr. Pen. In the very next Number of the "Pall Mall Gazette," Warrington read out, with roars of laughter, an article which by no means amused Arthur Pendennis, who was himself at work with a criticism for the next week's Number of the same journal; and in which the Spring Annual was ferociously maltreated by some unknown writer. The person of all most cruelly mauled was Pen himself. His verses had not appeared with his own name in the Spring Annual, but under an assumed signature. As he had refused to review the book, Shandon had handed it over to Mr. Bludyer, with directions to that author to dispose of it. And he had done so effectually. Mr. Bludyer, who was a man of very considerable talent, and of a race which, I believe, is quite extinct in the press of our

time, had a certain notoriety in his profession, and reputation for savage humour. He smashed and trampled down the poor spring flowers with no more mercy than a bull would have on a parterre; and having cut up the volume to his heart's content, went and sold it at a bookstall, and purchased a pint of brandy with the proceeds of the volume.

CHAPTER XV.

Where Pen appears in town and country.

LET us be allowed to pass over a few months of the history of Mr. Arthur Pendennis's life-time, during the which, many events may have occurred which were more interesting and exciting to himself, than they would be likely to prove to the reader of his present memoirs. We left him, in his last chapter, regularly entered upon his business as a professional writer, or literary hack, as Mr. Warrington chooses to style himself and his friend; and we know how the life of any hack, legal or literary, in a curacy, or in a marching regiment, or at a merchant's desk, is dull of routine, and tedious of description. One day's labour resembles another much too closely. A literary man has often to work for his bread against time, or against his will, or in spite of his health, or of his indolence, or of his repugnance to the subject on which he is called to exert himself, just like any other daily toiler. When you want to make money by Pegasus, (as he must, perhaps, who has no other saleable property,) farewell poetry and aerial flights: Pegasus only rises now like Mr. Green's balloon, at periods advertised before-hand, and when the spectator's money has been paid. Pegasus trots in harness, over the stony pavement, and pulls a cart or a cab behind him. Often Pegasus does his work with panting sides and trem-

bling knees, and not seldom gets a cut of the whip from his driver.

Do not let us, however, be too prodigal of our pity upon Pegasus. There is no reason why this animal should be exempt from labour, or illness, or decay, any more than any of the other creatures of God's world. If he gets the whip, Pegasus very often deserves it, and I for one am quite ready to protest with my friend, George Warrington, against the doctrine which some poetical sympathisers are inclined to put forward, viz., that men of letters, and what is called genius, are to be exempt from the prose duties of this daily, bread-wanting, tax-paying life, and are not to be made to work and pay like their neighbours.

Well then, the "Pall Mall Gazette" being duly established, and Arthur Pendennis's merits recognised as a flippant, witty, and amusing critic, he worked away hard every week, preparing reviews of such works as came into his department, and writing his reviews with flippancy certainly, but with honesty, and to the best of his power. It might be that a historian of three-score, who had spent a quarter of a century in composing a work of which our young gentleman disposed in the course of a couple of days' reading at the British Museum, was not altogether fairly treated by such a facile critic; or that a poet, who had been elaborating sublime sonnets and odes until he thought them fit for the public and for fame, was annoyed by two or three dozen pert lines in Mr. Pen's review, in which the poet's claims were settled by the critic, as if the latter were my lord on the bench, and the author a miserable little suitor trembling before him. The actors at the theatres complained of him woefully, too, and very likely he was too hard upon them. But there was not much harm done after all. It is different now as we know; but there were so few great historians, or great poets, or great

actors, in Pen's time, that scarce any at all came up for judgment before his critical desk. Those who got a little whipping, got what in the main was good for them; not that the judge was any better or wiser than the persons whom he sentenced, or indeed ever fancied himself so. Pen had a strong sense of humour and justice, and had not therefore an overweening respect for his own works; besides, he had his friend Warrington at his elbow — a terrible critic if the young man was disposed to be conceited, and more savage over Pen than ever he was to those whom he tried at his literary assize.

By these critical labours, and by occasional contributions to leading articles of the journal, when, without wounding his paper, this eminent publicist could conscientiously speak his mind, Mr. Arthur Pendennis gained the sum of four pounds four shillings weekly, and with no small pains and labour. Likewise he furnished Magazines and Reviews with articles of his composition, and is believed to have been (though on this score he never chooses to speak) London correspondent of the *Chatteries Champion*, which at that time contained some very brilliant and eloquent letters from the metropolis. By these labours the fortunate youth was enabled to earn a sum very nearly equal to four hundred pounds a-year; and on the second Christmas after his arrival in London, he actually brought a hundred pounds to his mother, as a dividend upon the debt which he owed to Laura. That Mrs. Pendennis read every word of her son's works, and considered him to be the profoundest thinker and most elegant writer of the day; that she thought his retribution of the hundred pounds an act of angelic virtue; that she feared he was ruining his health by his labours, and was delighted when he told her of the society which he met, and of the great men of letters and fashion whom he saw, will be imagined by all readers who have seen

son-worship amongst mothers, and that charming simplicity of love with which women in the country watch the career of their darlings in London. If John has held such and such a brief; if Tom has been invited to such and such a ball; or George has met this or that great and famous man at dinner; what a delight there is in the hearts of mothers and sisters at home in Somersetshire! How young Hopeful's letters are read and remembered! What a theme for village talk they give, and friendly congratulation! In the second winter, Pen came for a very brief space, and cheered the widow's heart, and lightened up the lonely house at Fair Oaks. Helen had her son all to herself; Laura was away on a visit to old Lady Rockminster; the folks of Clavering Park were absent; the very few old friends of the house, Doctor Portman at their head, called upon Mr. Pen, and treated him with marked respect; between mother and son, it was all fondness, confidence, and affection. It was the happiest fortnight of the widow's whole life; perhaps in the lives of both of them. The holiday was gone only too quickly; and Pen was back in the busy world, and the gentle widow alone again. She sent Arthur's money to Laura: I don't know why this young lady took the opportunity of leaving home when Pen was coming thither, or whether he was the more piqued or relieved by her absence.

He was by this time, by his own merits and his uncle's introductions, pretty well introduced into London, and known both in literary and polite circles. Amongst the former his fashionable reputation stood him in no little stead; he was considered to be a gentleman of good present means and better expectations, who wrote for his pleasure, than which there cannot be a greater recommendation to a young literary aspirant. Bacon, Bungay, and Co., were proud to accept his articles; Mr. Wenham asked him to dinner; Mr. Wagg

looked upon him with a favourable eye; and they reported how they met him at the houses of persons of fashion, amongst whom he was pretty welcome, as they did not trouble themselves about his means, present or future; as his appearance and address were good; and as he had got a character for being a clever fellow. Finally, he was asked to one house, because he was seen at another house: and thus no small varieties of London life were presented to the young man: he was made familiar with all sorts of people from Paternoster Row to Pimlico, and was as much at home at Mayfair dining-tables as at those tavern boards where some of his companions of the pen were accustomed to assemble.

Full of high spirits and curiosity, easily adapting himself to all whom he met, the young fellow pleased himself in this strange variety and jumble of men, and made himself welcome, or at ease at least, wherever he went. He would breakfast, for instance, at Mr. Plover's of a morning, in company with a Peer, a Bishop, a parliamentary orator, two blue ladies of fashion, a popular preacher, the author of the last new novel, and the very latest lion imported from Egypt or from America: and would quit this distinguished society for the back room at the newspaper office, where pens and ink and the wet proof sheets were awaiting him. Here would be Finucane, the sub-editor, with the last news from the Row: and Shandon would come in presently, and giving a nod to Pen, would begin scribbling his leading article at the other end of the table, flanked by the pint of sherry, which, when the attendant boy beheld him, was always silently brought for the Captain: or Mr. Bludyer's roaring voice would be heard in the front room, where that truculent critic would impound the books on the counter in spite of the timid remonstrances of Mr. Midge, the publisher, and after looking through the volumes would sell them at his accustomed book-stall, and

having drunken and dined upon the produce of the sale in a tavern box, would call for ink and paper, and proceed to "smash" the author of his dinner and the novel. Towards evening Mr. Pen would stroll in the direction of his club, and take up Warrington there for a constitutional walk. This exercise freed the lungs, and gave an appetite for dinner, after which Pen had the privilege to make his bow at some very pleasant houses which were opened to him; or the town before him for amusement. There was the Opera; or the Eagle Tavern; or a ball to go to in May Fair; or a quiet night with a cigar and a book and a long talk with Warrington; or a wonderful new song at the Back Kitchen; — at this time of his life Mr. Pen beheld all sorts of places and men; and very likely did not know how much he enjoyed himself until long after, when balls gave him no pleasure, neither did farces make him laugh; nor did the tavern joke produce the least excitement in him; nor did the loveliest dancer that ever showed her ankles cause him to stir from his chair after dinner. At his present mature age all these pleasures are over: and the times have passed away too. It is but a very very few years since — but the time is gone, and most of the men. Bludyer will no more bully authors or cheat landlords of their score. Shandon, the learned and thriftless, the witty and unwise, sleeps his last sleep. They buried honest Doolan the other day: never will he cringe or flatter, never pull long-bow or empty whiskey-noggin any more.

The London season was now blooming in its full vigour, and the fashionable newspapers abounded with information regarding the grand banquets, routs, and balls which were enlivening the polite world. Our gracious Sovereign was holding levees and drawing-rooms at St. James's: the bow-windows of the clubs were crowded with the heads of re-

spectable red-faced newspaper-reading gentlemen: along the Serpentine trailed thousands of carriages: squadrons of dandy horsemen trampled over Rotten Row: everybody was in town in a word; and of course Major Arthur Pendennis, who was somebody, was not absent.

With his head tied up in a smart bandana handkerchief, and his meagre carcass enveloped in a brilliant Turkish dressing-gown, the worthy gentleman sate on a certain morning by his fire-side, letting his feet gently simmer in a bath, whilst he took his early cup of tea, and perused his "Morning Post." He could not have faced the day without his two hours' toilet, without his early cup of tea, without his "Morning Post." I suppose nobody in the world except Morgan, not even Morgan's master himself, knew how feeble and ancient the Major was growing, and what numberless little comforts he required.

If men sneer, as our habit is, at the artifices of an old beauty, at her paint, perfumes, ringlets; at those innumerable, and to us unknown, stratagems with which she is said to remedy the ravages of time and reconstruct the charms whereof years have bereft her; the ladies, it is to be presumed, are not on their side altogether ignorant that men are vain as well as they, and that the toilets of old bucks are to the full as elaborate as their own. How is it that old Blushington keeps that constant little rose-tint on his cheeks; and where does old Blondel get the preparation which makes his silver hair pass for golden? Have you ever seen Lord Hotspur get off his horse when he thinks nobody is looking? Taken out of his stirrups, his shiny boots can hardly totter up the steps of Hotspur House. He is a dashing young nobleman still as you see the back of him in Rotten Row; when you behold him on foot, what an old, old fellow! Did you ever form to yourself any idea of Dick Lacy (Dick has been Dick these sixty years) in a natural state, and without his stays? All these men are

objects whom the observer of human life and manners may contemplate with as much profit as the most elderly Belgravian Venus, or inveterate Mayfair Jezebel. An old reprobate daddy long legs, who has never said his prayers (except perhaps in public) these fifty years: an old buck who still clings to as many of the habits of youth as his feeble grasp of health can hold by: who has given up the bottle, but sits with young fellows over it, and tells naughty stories upon toast and water — who has given up beauty, but still talks about it as wickedly as the youngest roué in company — such an old fellow, I say, if any parson in Pimlico or St. James's were to order the beadles to bring him into the middle aisle, and there set him in an arm-chair, and make a text of him, and preach about him to the congregation, could be turned to a wholesome use for once in his life, and might be surprised to find that some good thoughts came out of him. But, we are wandering from our text, the honest Major, who sits all this while with his feet cooling in the bath: Morgan takes them out of that place of purification, and dries them daintily, and proceeds to set the old gentleman on his legs, with waistband and wig, starched cravat, and spotless boots and gloves.

It was during these hours of the toilette that Morgan and his employer had their confidential conversations, for they did not meet much at other times of the day — the Major abhorring the society of his own chairs and tables in his lodgings; and Morgan, his master's toilet over and letters delivered, had his time very much on his own hands.

This spare time the active and well-mannered gentleman bestowed among the valets and butlers of the nobility, his acquaintance; and Morgan Pendennis, as he was styled, for, by such compound names, gentlemen's gentlemen are called in their private circles, was a frequent and welcome guest at some of the very highest tables in this town. He was a member

of two influential clubs in Mayfair and Pimlico; and he was thus enabled to know the whole gossip of the town, and entertain his master very agreeably during the two hours' toilet conversation. He knew a hundred tales and legends regarding persons of the very highest *ton*, whose valets canvass their august secrets, just, my dear Madam, as our own parlour-maids and dependents in the kitchen discuss our characters, our stinginess and generosity, our pecuniary means or embarrassments, and our little domestic or connubial tiffs and quarrels. If I leave this manuscript open on my table, I have not the slightest doubt Betty will read it, and they will talk it over in the lower regions to-night; and to-morrow she will bring in my breakfast with a face of such entire imperturbable innocence, that no mortal could suppose her guilty of playing the spy. If you and the Captain have high words upon any subject, which is just possible, the circumstances of the quarrel, and the characters of both of you, will be discussed with impartial eloquence over the kitchen tea-table; and if Mrs. Smith's maid should by chance be taking a dish of tea with yours, her presence will not undoubtedly act as a restraint upon the discussion in question; her opinion will be given with candour; and the next day her mistress will probably know that Captain and Mrs. Jones have been a quarrelling as usual. Nothing is secret. Take it as a rule that John knows everything: and as in our humble world so in the greatest: a duke is no more a hero to his *valet-de-chambre* than you or I; and his Grace's Man at his club, in company doubtless with other Men of equal social rank, talks over his master's character and affairs with the ingenuous truthfulness which befits gentlemen who are met together in confidence. Who is a niggard and screws up his money-boxes: who is in the hands of the money-lenders, and is putting his noble name on the back of bills of exchange: who is intimate with whose wife:

who wants whom to marry her daughter, and which he won't, no not at any price: — all these facts gentlemen's confidential gentlemen discuss confidentially, and are known and examined by every person who has any claim to rank in genteel society. In a word, if old Pendennis himself was said to know everything, and was at once admirably scandalous and delightfully discreet; it is but justice to Morgan to say, that a great deal of his master's information was supplied to that worthy man by his valet, who went out and foraged knowledge for him. Indeed, what more effectual plan is there to get a knowledge of London society, than to begin at the foundation — that is, at the kitchen-floor?

So Mr. Morgan and his employer conversed as the latter's toilet proceeded. There had been a drawing-room on the day previous, and the Major read among the presentations that of Lady Clavering by Lady Rockminster, and of Miss Amory by her mother Lady Clavering, — and in a further part of the paper their dresses were described, with a precision and in a jargon which will puzzle and amuse the antiquary of future generations. The sight of these names carried Pendennis back to the country. "How long have the Claverings been in London?" he asked; "pray, Morgan, have you seen any of their people?"

"Sir Francis have sent away his foring man, Sir," Mr. Morgan replied; "and have took a friend of mine as own man, Sir. Indeed he applied on my reckmendation. You may recklect Towler, Sir, — tall red-aired man — but dyes his air. Was groom of the chambers in Lord Levant's famly till his Lordship broke hup. It 's a fall for Towler, Sir; but pore men can't be particklar," said the valet, with a pathetic voice.

"Devilish hard on Towler, by gad!" said the Major, amused, "and not pleasant for Lord Levant — he, he!"

"Always knew it was coming, Sir. I spoke to you of it

Michaelmas was four years: when her Ladyship put the diamonds in pawn. It was Towler, Sir, took 'em in two cabs to Dobree's — and a good deal of the plate went the same way. Don't you remember seeing of it at Blackwall, with the Levant arms and coronick, and Lord Levant settn oppsit to it at the Marquis of Steyne's dinner? Beg your pardon; did I cut you, Sir?"

Morgan was now operating upon the Major's chin — he continued the theme while strapping the skilful razor. "They've took a house in Grosvenor Place, and are coming out strong, Sir. Her Ladyship's going to give three parties, besides a dinner a-week, Sir. Her fortune won't stand it — can't stand it."

"Gad, she had a devilish good cook when I was at Fair-oaks," the Major said, with very little compassion for the widow Amory's fortune.

"Marobblan was his name, Sir; — Marobblan's gone away, Sir," Morgan said, — and the Major, this time, with hearty sympathy, said, "he was devilish sorry to lose him."

"There's been a tremenjuous row about that Mosseer Mirobban," Morgan continued. "At a ball at Baymouth, Sir, bless his impadence, he challenged Mr. Harthur to fight a jewel, Sir, which Mr. Arthur was very near knocking him down, and pitchin' him outawinder, and serve him right; but Chevalier Strong, Sir, came up and stopped the shindy — I beg pardon, the holtercation, Sir — them French cooks has as much pride and hinsolence as if they was real gentlemen."

"I heard something of that quarrel," said the Major; "but Mirobolant was not turned off for that?"

"No, Sir — that affair, Sir, which Mr. Harthur forgave it him and beayed most handsome, was hushed hup: it was about Miss Hamory, Sir, that he ad is dismissial. Those French fellers, they fancy every body is in love with 'em; and

he climbed up the large grape vine to her winder, Sir, and was a trying to get in, when he was caught, Sir; and Mr. Strong came out, and they got the garden-engine and played on him, and there was no end of a row, Sir."

"Confound his impudence! You don't mean to say Miss Amory encouraged him," cried the Major, amazed at a peculiar expression in Mr. Morgan's countenance.

Morgan resumed his imperturbable demeanour. "Know nothing about it, Sir. Servants don't know them kind of things the least. Most probably there was nothing in it—so many lies is told about families—Marobblan went away, bag and baggage, saucepans, and piano, and all—the feller ad a pianna, and wrote potry in French, and he took a lodging at Clavering, and he hankered about the primises, and it was said that Madam Fribsby, the milliner, brought letters to Miss Hamory, though I don't believe a word about it; nor that he tried to pison hissself with charcoal, which it was all a humbug betwigtst him and Madam Fribsby; and he was nearly shot by the keeper in the park."

In the course of that very day, it chanced that the Major had stationed himself in the great window of Bays's Club in Saint James's Street, at the hour in the afternoon when you see a half-score of respectable old bucks similarly recreating themselves (Bays's is rather an old-fashioned place of resort now, and many of its members more than middle-aged; but in the time of the Prince Regent, these old fellows occupied the same window, and were some of the very greatest dandies in this empire) — Major Pendennis was looking from the great window, and spied his nephew Arthur walking down the street in company with his friend Mr. Popjoy.

"Look!" said Popjoy to Pen, as they passed, "did you ever pass Bays's at four o'clock, without seeing that

collection of old fogies? It's a regular museum. They ought to be cast in wax, and set up at Madame Tussaud's—"

"— In a chamber of old horrors by themselves," Pen said, laughing.

"— In the chamber of horrors! Gad, doosid good!" Pop cried. "They *are* old rogues, most of 'em, and no mistake. There's old Blondel; there's my Uncle Colchicum, the most confounded old sinner in Europe; there's — hullo! there's somebody rapping the window and nodding at us."

"It's my uncle, the Major," said Pen. "Is he an old sinner too?"

"Notorious old rogue," Pop said, wagging his head. ("Notowious old wogue," he pronounced the words, thereby rendering them much more emphatic.) "He's beckoning you in; he wants to speak to you."

"Come in too," Pen said.

"— Can't," replied the other. "Cut uncle Col. two years ago, about Mademoiselle Frangipane — Ta, ta," and the young sinner took leave of Pen, and the club of the elder criminals, and sauntered into Blacquièr's, an adjacent establishment, frequented by reprobates of his own age.

Colchicum, Blondel, and the senior bucks had just been conversing about the Clavering family, whose appearance in London had formed the subject of Major Pendennis's morning conversation with his valet. Mr. Blondel's house was next to that of Sir Francis Clavering, in Grosvenor Place: giving very good dinners himself, he had remarked some activity in his neighbour's kitchen. Sir Francis, indeed, had a new chef, who had come in more than once and dressed Mr. Blondel's dinner for him; that gentleman having only a remarkably expert female artist permanently engaged in his establishment, and employing such chiefs of note as happened

to be free on the occasion of his grand banquets. "They go to a devilish expense and see devilish bad company as yet, I hear, Mr. Blondel said, — they scour the streets, by gad, to get people to dine with 'em. Champignon says it breaks his heart to serve up a dinner to their society. What a shame it is that those low people should have money at all," cried Mr. Blondel, whose grandfather had been a reputable leather-breeches maker, and whose father had lent money to the Princes.

"I wish I had fallen in with the widow myself," sighed Lord Colchicum, "and not been laid up with that confounded gout at Leghorn. — I would have married the woman myself. — I'm told she has six hundred thousand pounds in the Threes."

"Not *quite* so much as that, — I knew her family in India," — Major Pendennis said. "I knew her family in India; her father was an enormously rich old indigo-planter, — know all about her, — Clavering has the next estate to ours in the country. — Ha! there's my nephew walking with" — "With mine, — the infernal young scamp," said Lord Colchicum, glowering at Popjoy out of his heavy eye-brows; and he turned away from the window as Major Pendennis tapped upon it.

The Major was in high good-humour. The sun was bright, the air brisk and invigorating. He had determined upon a visit to Lady Clavering on that day, and bethought him that Arthur would be a good companion for the walk across the Green Park to her ladyship's door. Master Pen was not displeased to accompany his illustrious relative, who pointed out a dozen great men in their brief transit through St. James's Street, and got bows from a Duke, at a crossing, a Bishop (on a cob), and a Cabinet Minister with an umbrella. The Duke gave the elder Pendennis a finger of a pipe-clayed glove to shake, which the Major embraced with great veneration; and all Pen's blood tingled, as he found himself in actual communication, as it were, with this famous man, (for Pen

had possession of the Major's left arm, whilst that gentleman's other wing was engaged with his Grace's right,) and he wished all Grey Friars' School, all Oxbridge University, all Pater-noster Row and the Temple, and Laura and his mother at Fair-oaks, could be standing on each side of the street, to see the meeting between him and his uncle, and the most famous duke in Christendom.

How do, Pendennis? — fine day," were his Grace's remarkable words, and with a nod of his august head he passed on — in a blue frock-coat and spotless white duck trowsers, in a white stock, with a shining buckle behind.

Old Pendennis, whose likeness to his grace has been remarked, began to imitate him unconsciously, after they had parted, speaking with curt sentences, after the manner of the great man. We have all of us, no doubt, met with more than one military officer who has so imitated the manner of a certain Great Captain of the Age; and has, perhaps, changed his own natural character and disposition, because Fate had endowed him with an aquiline nose. In like manner have we not seen many another man pride himself on having a tall forehead and a supposed likeness to Mr. Canning? many another go through life swelling with self-gratification on account of an imagined resemblance (we say, "imagined," because that anybody should be *really* like that most beautiful and perfect of men is impossible) to the great and revered George IV.: many third parties, who wore low necks to their dresses because they fancied that Lord Byron and themselves were similar in appearance: and has not the grave closed but lately upon poor Tom Bickerstaff, who having no more imagination than Mr. Joseph Hume, looked in the glass and fancied himself like Shakspeare? shaved his forehead so as farther to resemble the immortal bard, wrote tragedies incessantly, and died perfectly crazy — actually perished of his

forehead? These or similar freaks of vanity most people who have frequented the world must have seen in their experience. Pen laughed in his roguish sleeve at the manner in which his uncle began to imitate the great man from whom they had just parted: but Mr. Pen was as vain in his own way, perhaps, as the elder gentleman, and strutted, with a very consequential air of his own, by the Major's side.

"Yes, my dear boy," said the old bachelor, as they sauntered through the Green Park, where many poor children were disporting happily, and errand boys were playing at toss-halfpenny, and black sheep were grazing in the sunshine, and an actor was learning his part on a bench, and nursery maids and their charges sauntered here and there, and several couples were walking in a leisurely manner; "yes, depend on it, my boy; for a poor man, there is nothing like having good acquaintances. Who were those men, with whom you saw me in the bow-window at Bays's? Two were Peers of the realm. Hobananob *will* be a Peer, as soon as his grand-uncle dies, and he has had his third seizure; and of the other four, not one has less than his seven thousand a-year. Did you see that dark blue brougham, with that tremendous stepping horse, waiting at the door of the club? You'll know it again. It is Sir Hugh Trumpington's; he was never known to walk in his life; never appears in the streets on foot — never: and if he is going two doors off, to see his mother, the old dowager, (to whom I shall certainly introduce you, for she receives some of the best company in London,) gad, Sir, he mounts his horse at No. 23, and dismounts again at No. 25 A. He is now upstairs, at Bays's, playing picquet with Count Punter: he is the second-best player in England — as well he may be; for he plays every day of his life, except Sundays, (for Sir Hugh is an uncommonly religious man), from half-past three till half-past seven, when he dresses for dinner."

"A very pious manner of spending his time," Pen said, laughing, and thinking that his uncle was falling into the twaddling state.

"Gad, Sir, that is not the question. A man of his estate may employ his time as he chooses. When you are a baronet, a county member, with ten thousand acres of the best land in Cheshire, and such a place as Trumpington (though he never goes there), you may do as you like."

"And so that was his brougham, Sir, was it?" the nephew said, with almost a sneer.

"His brougham — O ay, yes! — and that brings me back to my point — revenons à nos moutons. Yes, begad! revenons à nos moutons. Well, that brougham is mine if I choose, between four and seven. Just as much mine as if I jobbed it from Tilbury's, begad, for thirty pound a-month. Sir Hugh is the best-natured fellow in the world; and if it hadn't been so fine an afternoon as it is, you and I would have been in that brougham at this very minute, on our way to Grosvenor Place. That is the benefit of knowing rich men; — I dine for nothing, Sir; — I go into the country, and I'm mounted for nothing. Other fellows keep hounds and game-keepers for me. *Sic vos non vobis*, as we used to say at Grey Friars, hey? I'm of the opinion of my old friend Leech, of the Forty-fourth; and a devilish good shrewd fellow he was, as most Scotchmen are. Gad, Sir, Leech used to say, 'He was so poor that he couldn't afford to know a poor man.'"

"You don't act up to your principles, uncle," Pen said, good-naturedly.

"Up to my principles; how, Sir?" the Major asked, rather testily.

"You would have cut me in Saint James's Street, Sir," Pen said, "were your practice not more benevolent than your theory; you who live with dukes and magnates of the

land, and would take no notice of a poor devil like me." By which speech we may see that Mr. Pen was getting on in the world, and could flatter as well as laugh in his sleeve.

Major Pendennis was appeased instantly, and very much pleased. He tapped affectionately his nephew's arm on which he was leaning, and said, — "You, Sir, you are my flesh and blood! Hang it, Sir, I've been very proud of you and very fond of you, but for your confounded follies and extravagancies — and wild oats, Sir, which I hope you've sown. Yes, begad! I hope you've sown 'em; I hope you've sown 'em, begad! My object, Arthur, is to make a man of you — to see you well placed in the world, as becomes one of your name and my own, Sir. You have got yourself a little reputation by your literary talents, which I am very far from undervaluing, though in my time, begad, poetry and genius and that sort of thing were devilish disreputable. There was poor Byron, for instance, who ruined himself, and contracted the worst habits by living with poets and newspaper-writers, and people of that kind. But the times are changed now — there's a run upon literature — clever fellows get into the best houses in town, begad! *Tempora mutantur*, Sir; and by Jove, I suppose whatever is right, as Shakspeare says."

Pen did not think fit to tell his uncle who was the author who had made use of that remarkable phrase, and here descending from the Green Park, the pair made their way into Grosvenor Place, and to the door of the mansion occupied there by Sir Francis and Lady Clavering.

The dining-room shutters of this handsome mansion were freshly gilded; the knockers shone gorgeous upon the newly-painted door; the balcony before the drawing-room bloomed with a portable garden of the most beautiful plants, and with flowers, white, and pink, and scarlet; the windows of the upper room (the sacred chamber and dressing-room of my lady,

doubtless), and even a pretty little casement of the third story, which keen-sighted Mr. Pen presumed to belong to the virgin bed-room of Miss Blanche Amory, were similarly adorned with floral ornaments, and the whole exterior face of the house presented the most brilliant aspect which fresh new paint, shining plate glass, newly cleaned bricks, and spotless mortar, could offer to the beholder.

"How Strong must have rejoiced in organising all this splendour," thought Pen. He recognised the Chevalier's genius in the magnificence before him.

"Lady Clavering is going out for her drive," the Major said. "We shall only have to leave our pasteboards, Arthur." He used the word "pasteboards," having heard it from some of the ingenuous youth of the nobility about town, and as a modern phrase suited to Pen's tender years. Indeed, as the two gentlemen reached the door, a landau drove up, a magnificent yellow carriage, lined with brocade or satin of a faint cream colour, drawn by wonderful grey horses, with flaming ribbons, and harness blazing all over with crests: no less than three of these heraldic emblems surmounted the coats of arms on the panels, and these shields contained a prodigious number of quarterings, betokening the antiquity and splendour of the house of Clavering and Snell. A coachman in a tight silver wig surmounted the magnificent hammercloth, (whereon the same arms were worked in bullion,) and controlled the prancing greys — a young man still, but of a solemn countenance, with a laced waistcoat and buckles in his shoes — little buckles, unlike those which John and Jeames, the footmen, wear, and which we know are large, and spread elegantly over the foot.

One of the leaves of the hall door was opened, and John — one of the largest of his race — was leaning against the door pillar, with his ambrosial hair powdered, his legs crossed; beautiful, silk-stockinged; in his hand his cane, gold-headed,

dolichoskion. Jeames was invisible, but near at hand, waiting in the hall, with the gentleman who does not wear livery, and ready to fling down the roll of hair-cloth over which her ladyship was to step to her carriage. These things and men, the which to tell of demands time, are seen in the glance of a practised eye: and, in fact, the Major and Pen had scarcely crossed the street, when the second *battant* of the door flew open; the horse-hair carpet tumbled down the door-steps to those of the carriage; John was opening it on one side of the emblazoned door, and Jeames on the other, and two ladies, attired in the highest style of fashion, and accompanied by a third, who carried a Blenheim spaniel, yelping in a light blue ribbon, came forth to ascend the carriage.

Miss Amory was the first to enter, which she did with aerial lightness, and took the place which she liked best. Lady Clavering next followed, but her ladyship was more mature of age and heavy of foot, and one of those feet, attired in a green satin boot, with some part of a stocking, which was very fine, whatever the ancle might be which it encircled, might be seen swaying on the carriage-step, as her ladyship leaned for support on the arm of the unbending Jeames, by the enraptured observer of female beauty who happened to be passing at the time of this imposing ceremonial.

The Pendennises senior and junior beheld those charms as they came up to the door — the Major looking grave and courtly, and Pen somewhat abashed at the carriage and its owners; for he thought of sundry little passages at Clavering, which made his heart beat rather quick.

At that moment Lady Clavering, looking round, saw the pair — she was on the first carriage-step, and would have been in the vehicle in another second, but she gave a start backwards (which caused some of the powder to fly from the hair of ambrosial Jeames), and crying out, "Lor, if it isn't Arthur

Pendennis and the old Major!" jumped back to terra firma directly, and holding out two fat hands, encased in tight orange-coloured gloves, the good-natured woman warmly greeted the Major and his nephew.

"Come in both of you. — Why haven't you been before? — Get out, Blanche, and come and see your old friends. — O, I'm *so* glad to see you. We've been waitin' and waitin' for you ever so long. Come in, luncheon ain't gone down," cried out this hospitable lady, squeezing Pen's hand in both hers, (she had dropped the Major's after a brief wrench of recognition), and Blanche, casting up her eyes towards the chimneys, descended from the carriage presently, with a timid, blushing, appealing look, and gave a little hand to Major Pendennis.

The companion with the spaniel looked about irresolute, and doubting whether she should not take Fido his airing; but she too turned right about face and entered the house, after Lady Clavering, her daughter, and the two gentlemen. And the carriage, with the prancing greys, was left unoccupied, save by the coachman in the silver wig.

CHAPTER XVI.

In which the sylph reappears.

BETTER folks than Morgan, the valet, were not so well instructed as that gentleman, regarding the amount of Lady Clavering's riches; and the legend in London, upon her Ladyship's arrival in the polite metropolis, was, that her fortune was enormous. Indigo factories, opium clippers, banks overflowing with rupees, diamonds and jewels, of native princes, and vast sums of interest paid by them for loans contracted by themselves or their predecessors to Lady Clavering's father, were mentioned as sources of her wealth. Her account at her London banker's was positively known, and the sum

embraced so many cyphers as to create as many O's of admiration in the wondering hearer. It was a known fact that an envoy from an Indian Prince, a Colonel Altamont, the Nawaub of Lucknow's prime favourite, an extraordinary man, who had, it was said, embraced Mahometanism, and undergone a thousand wild and perilous adventures, was at present in this country, trying to negotiate with the Begum Clavering, the sale of the Nawaub's celebrated nose-ring diamond, "the light of the Dewan."

Under the title of the Begum, Lady Clavering's fame began to spread in London before she herself descended upon the Capital, and as it has been the boast of Delolme, and Blackstone, and all panegyrists of the British Constitution, that we admit into our aristocracy merit of every kind, and that the lowliest-born man, if he but deserve it, may wear the robes of a peer, and sit alongside of a Cavendish or a Stanley: so it ought to be the boast of our good society, that haughty though it be, naturally jealous of its privileges, and careful who shall be admitted into its circle, yet, if an individual be but rich enough, all barriers are instantly removed, and he or she is welcomed, as from her wealth he merits to be. This fact shows our British independence and honest feeling — our higher orders are not such mere haughty aristocrats as the ignorant represent them: on the contrary, if a man have money they will hold out their hands to him, eat his dinners, dance at his balls, marry his daughters, or give their own lovely girls to his sons, as affably, as your commonest roturier would do.

As he had superintended the arrangements of the country mansion, our friend, the Chevalier Strong, gave the benefit of his taste and advice to the fashionable London upholsterers, who prepared the town house for the reception of the Clavering family. In the decoration of this elegant abode, honest Strong's soul rejoiced as much as if he had been himself its

proprietor. He hung and re-hung the pictures, he studied the positions of sofas, he had interviews with wine merchants and purveyors who were to supply the new establishment; and at the same time the Baronet's factotum and confidential friend took the opportunity of furnishing his own chambers, and stocking his snug little cellar: his friends complimented him upon the neatness of the former; and the select guests who came in to share Strong's cutlet now found a bottle of excellent claret to accompany the meal. The Chevalier was now, as he said, "in clover:" he had a very comfortable set of rooms in Shepherd's Inn. He was waited on by a former Spanish Legionary and comrade of his whom he had left at a breach of a Spanish fort, and found at a crossing in Tottenham-court Road, and whom he had elevated to the rank of body-servant to himself and to the chum who, at present, shared his lodgings. This was no other than the favourite of the Nawaub of Lucknow, the valiant Colonel Altamont.

No man was less curious, or at any rate, more discreet, than Ned Strong, and he did not care to inquire into the mysterious connection which, very soon after their first meeting at Baymouth, was established between Sir Francis Clavering and the envoy of the Nawaub. The latter knew some secret regarding the former, which put Clavering into his power, somehow; and Strong, who knew that his patron's early life had been rather irregular, and that his career with his regiment in India had not been brilliant, supposed that the Colonel, who swore he knew Clavering well at Calcutta, had some hold upon Sir Francis, to which the latter was forced to yield. In truth, Strong had long understood Sir Francis Clavering's character, as that of a man utterly weak in purpose, in principle, and intellect, a moral and physical trifle and poltroon.

With poor Clavering, his Excellency had had one or two interviews after their Baymouth meeting, the nature of which conversations the Baronet did not confide to Strong: although he sent letters to Altamont by that gentleman, who was his ambassador in all sorts of affairs. On one of these occasions the Nawaub's envoy must have been in an exceeding ill-humour; for he crushed Clavering's letter in his hand, and said with his own particular manner and emphasis:—

"A hundred, be hanged. I'll have no more letters nor no more shilly-shally. Tell Clavering I'll have a thousand, or by Jove I'll split, and burst him all to atoms. Let him give me a thousand and I'll go abroad, and I give you my honour as a gentleman, I'll not ask him for no more for a year. Give him that message from me, Strong, my boy; and tell him if the money ain't here next Friday at 12 o'clock, as sure as my name's what it is, I'll have a paragraph in the newspaper on Saturday, and next week I'll blow up the whole concern."

Strong carried back these words to his principal, on whom their effect was such that actually on the day and hour appointed, the Chevalier made his appearance once more at Altamont's hotel at Baymouth, with the sum of money required. Altamont was a gentleman, he said, and behaved as such; he paid his bill at the Inn, and the Baymouth paper announced his departure on a foreign tour. Strong saw him embark at Dover. "It must be forgery at the very least," he thought, "that has put Clavering into this fellow's power, and the Colonel has got the bill."

Before the year was out, however, this happy country saw the Colonel once more upon its shores. A confounded run on the red had finished him, he said, at Baden Baden: no gentleman could stand against a colour coming up fourteen times. He had been obliged to draw upon Sir Francis Claver-

ing for means of returning home: and Clavering, though pressed for money, (for he had election expenses, had set up his establishment in the country, and was engaged in furnishing his London house,) yet found means to accept Colonel Altamont's bill, though evidently very much against his will; for in Strong's hearing, Sir Francis wished to heaven, with many curses, that the Colonel could have been locked up in a debtor's goal in Germany for life, so that he might never be troubled again.

These sums for the Colonel Sir Francis was obliged to raise without the knowledge of his wife; for though perfectly liberal, nay, sumptuous in her expenditure, the good lady had inherited a tolerable aptitude for business along with the large fortune of her father, Snell, and gave to her husband only such a handsome allowance as she thought befitted a gentleman of his rank. Now and again she would give him a present, or pay an outstanding gambling debt; but she always exacted a pretty accurate account of the monies so required; and respecting the subsidies to the Colonel, Clavering fairly told Strong that he *couldn't* speak to his wife.

Part of Mr. Strong's business in life was to procure this money and other sums, for his patron. And in the Chevalier's apartments, in Shepherd's Inn, many negotiations took place between gentlemen of the moneyed world and Sir Francis Clavering; and many valuable bank notes and pieces of stamped paper were passed between them. When a man has been in the habit of getting in debt from his early youth, and of exchanging his promises to pay at twelve months against present sums of money, it would seem as if no piece of good fortune ever permanently benefited him: a little while after the advent of prosperity, the money-lender is pretty certain to be in the house again, and the bills with the old signature in the market. Clavering found it more convenient to see these gentry at

Strong's lodgings than at his own; and such was the Chevalier's friendship for the Baronet, that although he did not possess a shilling of his own, his name might be seen as the drawer of almost all the bills of exchange which Sir Francis Clavering accepted. Having drawn Clavering's bills, he got them discounted "in the City." When they became due he parleyed with the bill-holders, and gave them instalments of their debt, or got time in exchange for fresh acceptances. Regularly or irregularly, gentlemen must live somehow: and as we read how, the other day, at Comorn, the troops forming that garrison were gay and lively, acted plays, danced at balls, and consumed their rations; though menaced with an assault from the enemy without the walls, and with a gallows if the Austrians were successful, — so there are hundreds of gallant spirits in this town, walking about in good spirits, dining every day in tolerable gaiety and plenty, and going to sleep comfortably; with a bailiff always more or less near, and a rope of debt round their necks — the which trifling inconveniences, Ned Strong, the old soldier, bore very easily.

But we shall have another opportunity of making acquaintance with these and some other interesting inhabitants of Shepherd's Inn, and in the meanwhile are keeping Lady Clavering and her friends too long waiting on the door steps of Grosvenor Place.

First they went into the gorgeous dining-room, fitted up, Lady Clavering couldn't for goodness gracious tell why, in the middle-aged style, "unless," said her good-natured ladyship, laughing, "because me and Clavering are middle-aged people;" — and here they were offered the copious remains of the luncheon of which Lady Clavering and Blanche had just partaken. When nobody was near, our little Sylphide, who scarcely ate at dinner more than the six grains of rice of Amina, the friend of the Ghouls in the Arabian Nights, was

most active with her knife and fork, and consumed a very substantial portion of mutton cutlets: in which piece of hypocrisy it is believed she resembled other young ladies of fashion. Pen and his uncle declined the refection, but they admired the dining-room with fitting compliments, and pronounced it "very chaste," that being the proper phrase. There were, indeed, high-backed Dutch chairs of the seventeenth century; there was a sculptured carved buffet of the sixteenth; there was a sideboard robbed out of the carved work of a church in the Low Countries, and a large brass cathedral lamp over the round oak table; there were old family portraits from Wardour Street and tapestry from France, bits of armour, double-handed swords and battle-axes made of *carton-pierre*, looking-glasses, statuettes of saints, and Dresden china — nothing, in a word, could be chaster. Behind the dining-room was the library, fitted with busts and books all of a size, and wonderful easy chairs, and solemn bronzes in the severe classic style. Here it was that, guarded by double doors, Sir Francis smoked cigars, and read "Bell's Life in London," and went to sleep after dinner, when he was not smoking over the billiard-table at his clubs, or punting at the gambling-houses in Saint James's.

But what could equal the chaste splendour of the drawing-rooms? — the carpets were so magnificently fluffy that your foot made no more noise on them than your shadow: on their white ground bloomed roses and tulips as big as warming-pans: about the room were high chairs and low chairs, bandy-legged chairs, chairs so attenuated that it was a wonder any but a sylph could sit upon them, marquetterie-tables covered with marvellous gimeracks, china ornaments of all ages and countries, bronzes, gilt daggers, Books of Beauty, yataghans, Turkish papooshes and boxes of Parisian bonbons. Wherever you sat down there were Dresden shepherds and shepherdesses

convenient at your elbow; there were, moreover, light blue poodles and ducks and cocks and hens in porcelain; there were nymphs by Boucher, and shepherdesses by Greuze, very chaste indeed; there were muslin curtains and brocade curtains, gilt cages with parroquets and love birds, two squealing cockatoos, each out-squealing and out-chattering the other; a clock singing tunes on a console-table, and another booming the hours like Great Tom, on the mantel-piece — there was, in a word, everything that comfort could desire, and the most elegant taste devise. A London drawing-room, fitted up without regard to expense, is surely one of the noblest and most curious sights of the present day. The Romans of the Lower Empire, the dear Marchionesses and Countesses of Louis XV., could scarcely have had a finer taste than our modern folks exhibit; and every body who saw Lady Clavering's reception-rooms, was forced to confess that they were most elegant; and that the prettiest rooms in London — Lady Harley Quin's, Lady Hanway Wardour's, or Mrs. Hodge-Podgson's own, the great Railroad Cræsus' wife, were not fitted up with a more consummate "chastity."

Poor Lady Clavering, meanwhile, knew little regarding these things, and had a sad want of respect for the splendours around her. "I only know they cost a precious deal of money, Major," she said to her guest, "and that I don't advise you to try one of them gossamer gilt chairs: *I* came down on *one* the night we gave our second dinner party. Why didn't you come and see us before? We'd have asked you to it."

"You would have liked to see Mamma break a chair, wouldn't you, Mr. Pendennis?" dear Blanche said with a sneer. She was angry because Pen was talking and laughing with Mamma, because Mamma had made a number of blunders in describing the house — for a hundred other good reasons.

"I should like to have been by to give Lady Clavering my arm if she had need of it," Pen answered, with a bow and a blush.

"*Quel preux Chevalier!*" cried the Sylphide, tossing up her little head.

"I have a fellow-feeling with those who fall, remember," Pen said. "I suffered myself very much from doing so once."

"And you went home to Laura to console you," said Miss Amory. Pen winced. He did not like the remembrance of the consolation which Laura had given to him, nor was he very well pleased to find that his rebuff in that quarter was known to the world; so as he had nothing to say in reply, he began to be immensely interested in the furniture round about him and to praise Lady Clavering's taste with all his might.

"Me, don't praise me," said honest Lady Clavering, "it's all the upholsterer's doings and Captain Strong's, they did it all while we was at the Park — and — and — Lady Rockminster has been here and says the salongs are very well," said Lady Clavering, with an air and tone of great deference.

"My cousin Laura has been staying with her," Pen said.

"It's not the dowager: it is *the* Lady Rockminster."

"Indeed!" cried Major Pendennis, when he heard this great name of fashion, "If you have her ladyship's approval, Lady Clavering, you cannot be far wrong. No, no, you cannot be far wrong. Lady Rockminster, I should say, Arthur, is the very centre of the circle of fashion and taste. The rooms *are* beautiful indeed!" and the Major's voice hushed as he spoke of this great lady, and he looked round and surveyed the apartments awfully and respectfully, as if he had been at church.

"Yes, Lady Rockminster has took us up," said Lady Clavering.

"Taken us up, Mamma," cried Blanche, in a shrill voice.

"Well, taken us up, then," said my lady, "it's very kind of her, and I dare say we shall like it when we git used to it, only at first one don't fancy being took — well, taken up, at all. She is going to give our balls for us; and wants to invite all our dinners. But I won't stand that. I will have my old friends and I won't let her send all the cards out, and sit mum at the head of my own table. You must come to me, Arthur and Major — come, let me see, on the 14th. — It ain't one of our grand dinners, Blanche" she said, looking round at her daughter, who bit her lips and frowned very savagely for a sylphide.

The Major, with a smile and a bow, said he would much rather come to a quiet meeting than to a grand dinner. He had had enough of those large entertainments, and preferred the simplicity of the home circle.

"I always think a dinner's the best the second day," said Lady Clavering, thinking to mend her first speech. "On the 14th we'll be quite a snug little party;" at which second blunder, Miss Blanche clasped her hands in despair, and said "O, Mamma, *vous êtes incorrigible*." Major Pendennis vowed that he liked snug dinners of all things in the world, and confounded her ladyship's impudence for daring to ask such a man as *him* to a second day's dinner. But he was a man of an economical turn of mind, and bethinking himself that he could throw over these people if anything better should offer, he accepted with the blandest air. As for Pen, he was not a diner-out of thirty years' standing as yet, and the idea of a fine feast in a fine house was still perfectly welcome to him.

"What was that pretty little quarrel which engaged itself between your worship and Miss Amory?" the Major asked of Pen, as they walked away together. "I thought you used to be *au mieux* in that quarter."

"Used to be," answered Pen, with a dandified air, "is a
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vague phrase regarding a woman. Was and is are two very different terms, Sir, as regards women's hearts especially."

"Egad, they change as we do," cried the elder. "When we took the Cape of Good Hope, I recollect there was a lady who talked of poisoning herself for your humble servant; and, begad, in three months, she ran away from her husband with somebody else. Don't get yourself entangled with that Miss Amory. She is forward, affected, and underbred; and her character is somewhat — never mind what. But don't think of her; ten thousand pound won't do for you. What, my good fellow, is ten thousand pound? I would scarcely pay that girl's milliner's bill with the interest of the money."

"You seem to be a connoisseur in millinery, Uncle," Pen said.

"I was, Sir, I was," replied the senior; "and the old war-horse, you know, never hears the sound of a trumpet, but he begins to he, he! — you understand," — and he gave a killing though somewhat superannuated leer and bow to a carriage that passed them and entered the Park.

"Lady Catherine Martingale's carriage," he said, "mons'ous fine girls the daughters, though, gad, I remember their mother a thousand times handsomer. No, Arthur, my dear fellow, with your person and expectations, you ought to make a good coup in marriage some day or other; and though I wouldn't have this repeated at Fairoaks, you rogue, ha! ha! a reputation for a little wickedness, and for being an *homme dangereux*, don't hurt a young fellow with the women. They like it, Sir — they hate a milksop . . . young men must be young men, you know. But for marriage," continued the veteran moralist, "that is a very different matter. Marry a woman with money. I've told you before it is as easy to get a rich wife as a poor one; and a doosed deal more comfortable to sit down to a well-cooked dinner, with your little entrées nicely served,

than to have nothing but a damned cold leg of mutton between you and your wife. We shall have a good dinner on the 14th, when we dine with Sir Francis Clavering: stick to that, my boy, in your relations with the family. Cultivate 'em, but keep 'em for dining. No more of your youthful follies and nonsense about love in a cottage."

"It must be a cottage with a double coach-house, a cottage of gentility, Sir," said Pen, quoting the hackneyed ballad of the Devil's Walk: but his Uncle did not know that poem (though, perhaps, he might be leading Pen upon the very promenade in question), and went on with his philosophical remarks, very much pleased with the aptness of the pupil to whom he addressed them. Indeed Arthur Pendennis was a clever fellow, who took his colour very readily from his neighbour, and found the adaptation only too easy.

Warrington, the grumbler, growled out that Pen was becoming such a puppy that soon there would be no bearing him. But the truth is, the young man's success and dashing manners pleased his elder companion. He liked to see Pen gay and spirited, and brim-full of health, and life, and hope; as a man who has long since left off being amused with clown and harlequin, still gets a pleasure in watching a child at a pantomime. Mr. Pen's former sulkiness disappeared with his better fortune: and he bloomed as the sun began to shine upon him.

CHAPTER XVII.

In which Colonel Altamont appears and disappears.

ON the day appointed, Major Pendennis, who had formed no better engagement, and Arthur who desired none, arrived together to dine with Sir Francis Clavering. The only tenants

of the drawing-room when Pen and his uncle reached it, were Sir Francis and his wife, and our friend Captain Strong, whom Arthur was very glad to see, though the Major looked very sulkily at Strong, being by no means well pleased to sit down to dinner with Clavering's d—house-steward, as he irreverently called Strong. But Mr. Welbore Welbore, Clavering's country neighbour and brother member of Parliament, speedily arriving, Pendennis the elder was somewhat appeased, for Welbore, though perfectly dull, and taking no more part in the conversation at dinner than the footman behind his chair, was a respectable country gentleman of ancient family and seven thousand a-year; and the Major felt always at ease in such society. To these were added other persons of note: the Dowager Lady Rockminster, who had her reasons for being well with the Clavering family, and the Lady Agnes Foker, with her son Mr. Harry, our old acquaintance. Mr. Pynsent could not come, his parliamentary duties keeping him at the House, duties which sate upon the two other senators very lightly. Miss Blanche Amory was the last of the company who made her appearance. She was dressed in a killing white silk dress, which displayed her pearly shoulders to the utmost advantage. Foker whispered to Pen, who regarded her with eyes of evident admiration, that he considered her "a stunner." She chose to be very gracious to Arthur upon this day, and held out her hand most cordially, and talked about dear Fair Oaks, and asked for dear Laura and his mother, and said she was longing to go back to the country, and in fact was entirely simple, affectionate, and artless.

Harry Foker thought he had never seen anybody so amiable and delightful. Not accustomed much to the society of ladies, and ordinarily being dumb in their presence, he found that he could speak before Miss Amory, and became

uncommonly lively and talkative, even before the dinner was announced and the party descended to the lower rooms. He would have longed to give his arm to the fair Blanche, and conduct her down the broad carpeted stair; but she fell to the lot of Pen upon this occasion, Mr. Foker being appointed to escort Mrs. Welbore Welbore, in consequence of his superior rank as an earl's grandson.

But though he was separated from the object of his desire during the passage down stairs, the delighted Foker found himself by Miss Amory's side at the dinner table, and flattered himself that he had manœuvred very well in securing that happy place. It may be that the move was not his, but that it was made by another person. Blanche had thus the two young men, one on each side of her, and each tried to render himself gallant and agreeable.

Foker's mamma, from her place, surveying her darling boy, was surprised at his vivacity. Harry talked constantly to his fair neighbour about the topics of the day.

"Seen Taglioni in the Sylphide, Miss Amory? Bring me that souprame of Volile again, if you please (this was addressed to the attendant near him), very good: can't think where the souprames come from; what becomes of the legs of the fowls, I wonder? She's clipping in the Sylphide, ain't she?" and he began very kindly to hum the pretty air which pervades that prettiest of all ballets, now faded into the past with that most beautiful and gracious of all dancers. Will the young folks ever see anything so charming, anything so classic, anything like Taglioni?

"Miss Amory is a sylph herself," said Mr. Pen.

"What a delightful tenor voice you have, Mr. Foker," said the young lady. "I am sure you have been well taught. I sing a little myself. I should like to sing with you."

Pen remembered that words very similar had been ad-

dressed to himself by the young lady, and that she had liked to sing with him in former days. And sneering within himself, he wondered with how many other gentlemen she had sung duets since his time? But he did not think fit to put this awkward question aloud: and only said, with the very tenderest air which he could assume, "I should like to hear you sing again, Miss Blanche. I never heard a voice I liked so well as yours, I think."

"I thought you liked Laura's," said Miss Blanche.

"Laura's is a contralto: and that voice is very often out, you know," Pen said, bitterly. "I have heard a great deal of music, in London," he continued. "I'm tired of those professional people — they sing too loud — or I have grown too old or too blasé. One grows old very soon, in London, Miss Amory. And like all old fellows, I only care for the songs I heard in my youth."

"I like English music best. I don't care for foreign songs much. Get me some saddle of mutton," said Mr. Foker.

"I adore English ballads, of all things," said Miss Amory.

"Sing me one of the old songs after dinner, will you," said Pen, with an imploring voice.

"Shall I sing you an English song, after dinner," asked the Sylphide, turning to Mr. Foker. "I will, if you will promise to come up soon:" and she gave him a perfect broadside of her eyes.

"I'll come up after dinner, fast enough," he said, simply. "I don't care about much wine afterwards — I take my whack at dinner — I mean my share, you know; and when I have had as much as I want I toddle up to tea. I'm a domestic character, Miss Amory — my habits are simple — and when I'm pleased I'm generally in a good humour, ain't I, Pen? — that jelly, if you please — not that one, the other with the cherries inside. How the doose *do* they get those cherries inside the jellies?" In this way the artless youth prattled on:

and Miss Amory listened to him with inexhaustible good humour. When the ladies took their departure for the upper regions, Blanche made the two young men promise faithfully to quit the table soon, and departed with kind glances to each. She dropped her gloves on Foker's side of the table, and her handkerchief on Pen's. Each had had some little attention paid to him: her politeness to Mr. Foker was perhaps a little more encouraging than her kindness to Arthur: but the benevolent little creature did her best to make both the gentlemen happy. Foker caught her last glance as she rushed out of the door; that bright look passed over Mr. Strong's broad white waistcoat, and shot straight at Harry Foker's. The door closed on the charmer: he sat down with a sigh, and swallowed a bumper of claret.

As the dinner at which Pen and his uncle took their places was not one of our grand parties, it had been served at a considerable earlier hour than those ceremonial banquets of the London season, which custom has ordained shall scarcely take place before nine o'clock; and, the company being small, and Miss Blanche, anxious to betake herself to her piano in the drawing-room, giving constant hints to her mother to retreat, — Lady Clavering made that signal very speedily, so that it was quite daylight yet when the ladies reached the upper apartments, from the flower-embroidered balconies of which they could command a view of the two Parks, of the poor couples and children still sauntering in the one, and of the equipages of ladies and the horses of dandies passing through the arch of the other. The sun, in a word, had not set behind the elms of Kensington Gardens, and was still gilding the statue erected by the ladies of England in honour of his Grace the Duke of Wellington, when Lady Clavering and her female friends left the gentlemen drinking wine.

The windows of the dining-room were opened to let in the fresh air, and afforded to the passers-by in the street a pleasant or, perhaps, tantalising view of six gentlemen in white waistcoats, with a quantity of decanters and a variety of fruits before them — little boys, as they passed and jumped up at the area-railings, and took a peep, said to one another, "Mi hi, Jim, shouldn't you like to be there, and have a cut of that there pine-apple?" — the horses and carriages of the nobility and gentry passed by, conveying them to Belgravian toilets: the policeman, with clamping feet, patrolled up and down before the mansion: the shades of evening began to fall: the gasman came and lighted the lamps before Sir Francis's door: the butler entered the dining-room, and illuminated the antique gothic chandelier over the antique carved oak dining-table: so that from outside the house you looked inwards upon a night scene of feasting and wax candles; and from within you beheld a vision of a calm summer evening, and the wall of Saint James's Park, and the sky above, in which a star or two was just beginning to twinkle.

Jeames, with folded legs, leaning against the door-pillar of his master's abode, looked forth musingly upon the latter tranquil sight: whilst a spectator clinging to the railings, examined the former scene. Policeman X passing, gave his attention to neither, but fixed it upon the individual holding by the railings, and gazing into Sir Francis Clavering's dining-room, where Strong was laughing and talking away, making the conversation for the party.

The man at the railings was very gorgeously attired with chains, jewellery, and waistcoats, which the illumination from the house lighted up to great advantage; his boots were shiny; he had brass buttons to his coat, and large white wristbands over his knuckles; and indeed looked so grand, that X imagined he beheld a member of parliament, or a person of

consideration before him. Whatever his rank, however, the M. P., or person of consideration, was considerably excited by wine; for he lurched and reeled somewhat in his gait, and his hat was cocked over his wild and blood-shot eyes in a manner which no sober hat ever could assume. His copious black hair was evidently surreptitious, and his whiskers of the Tyrian purple.

As Strong's laughter, following after one of his own *gros mots*, came ringing out of window, this gentleman without laughed and sniggered in the queerest way likewise, and he slapped his thigh and winked at Jeames pensive in the portico, as much as to say, "Plush, my boy, isn't that a good story?"

Jeames's attention had been gradually drawn from the moon in the heavens to this sublunary scene; and he was puzzled and alarmed by the appearance of the man in shiny boots. "A holtercation," he remarked afterwards, in the servant's-hall — "a holtercation with a feller in the streets is never no good; and indeed he was not hired for any such purpose." So, having surveyed the man for some time, who went on laughing, reeling, nodding his head with tipsy knowingness, Jeames looked out of the portico, and softly called "Pleaceman," and beckoned to that officer.

X marched up resolute, with one Berlin glove stuck in his belt-side, and Jeames simply pointed with his index finger to the individual who was laughing against the railings. Not one single word more than "Pleaceman," did he say, but stood there in the calm summer evening, pointing calmly: a grand sight.

X advanced to the individual and said, "Now, Sir, will you have the kindness to move hon?"

The individual, who was in perfect good humour, did not appear to hear one word which Policeman X uttered, but

nodded and wagged his grinning head at Strong, until his hat almost fell from his head over the area railings.

"Now, Sir, move on, do you hear?" cries X, in a much more peremptory tone, and he touched the stranger gently with one of the fingers inclosed in the gauntlets of the Berlin woof.

He of the many rings instantly started, or rather staggered back, into what is called an attitude of self-defence, and in that position began the operation which is entitled "squaring," at Policeman X, and showed himself brave and warlike, if unsteady. "Hullo! keep your hands off a gentleman," he said, with an oath which need not be repeated.

"Move on out of this," said X, "and don't be a blocking up the pavement, staring into gentlemen's dining-rooms."

"Not stare — ho, ho, — not stare — that *is* a good one," replied the other with a satiric laugh and sneer — "Who's to prevent me from staring, looking at my friends, if I like? not you, old highlows."

"Friends! I dessay. Move on," answered X.

"If you touch me, I'll pitch into you, I will," roared the other. "I tell you I know 'em all — That's Sir Francis Clavering, Baronet, M. P. — I know him, and he knows me — and that's Strong, and that's the young chap that made the row at the ball. I say, Strong, Strong!"

"It's that d — Altamont," cried Sir Francis within, with a start and a guilty look; and Strong also, with a look of annoyance, got up from the table, and ran out to the intruder.

A gentleman in a white waistcoat, running out from a dining-room bare-headed, a policeman, and an individual decently attired, engaged in almost fistycuffs on the pavement, were enough to make a crowd, even in that quiet neighbourhood, at half-past eight o'clock in the evening, and a small mob began to assemble before Sir Francis Clavering's door.

"For God's sake, come in," Strong said, seizing his acquaintance's arm. "Send for a cab, James, if you please," he added in an under voice to that domestic; and carrying the excited gentleman out of the street, the outer door was closed upon him, and the small crowd began to move away.

Mr. Strong had intended to convey the stranger into Sir Francis's private sitting-room, where the hats of the male guests were awaiting them, and having there soothed his friend by bland conversation, to have carried him off as soon as the cab arrived — but the new comer was in a great state of wrath at the indignity which had been put upon him; and when Strong would have led him into the second door, said in a tipsy voice. "*That ain't the door — that's the dining-room door — where the drink's going on — and I'll go and have some, hy Jove; I'll go and have some.*" At this audacity the butler stood aghast in the hall, and placed himself before the door: but it opened behind him, and the master of the house made his appearance, with anxious looks.

"*I will have some, — by — I will,*" the intruder was roaring out, as Sir Francis came forward. "Hullo! Clavering, I say I'm come to have some wine with you; hay! old boy — hay, old corkscrew? Get us a bottle of the yellow seal, you old thief — the very best — a hundred rupees a dozen, and no mistake."

The host reflected a moment over his company. There is only Welbore, Pendennis, and those two lads, he thought — and with a forced laugh and a piteous look, he said, — "Well, Altamont, come in. I am very glad to see you, I'm sure."

Colonel Altamont, for the intelligent reader has doubtless long ere this discovered in the stranger His Excellency the Ambassador of the Nawaub of Lucknow, reeled into the dining-room, with a triumphant look towards Jeames, the footman, which seemed to say, "There, Sir, what do you think of

that? *Now*, am I a gentleman or no?" and sank down into the first vacant chair. Sir Francis Clavering timidly stammered out the Colonel's name to his guest Mr. Welbore Welbore, and his Excellency began drinking wine forthwith and gazing round upon the company, now with the most wonderful frowns, and anon with the blindest smiles, and hiccupped remarks encomiastic of the drink which he was imbibing.

"Very singular man. Has resided long in a native court in India," Strong said, with great gravity, the Chevalier's presence of mind never deserting him — "in those Indian courts they get very singular habits."

"Very," said Major Pendennis, drily, and wondering what in goodness' name was the company into which he had got.

Mr. Foker was pleased with the new comer. "It's the man who would sing the Malay song at the Back-Kitchen," he whispered to Pen. "Try this pine, Sir," he then said to Colonel Altamont, "it's uncommonly fine."

"Pines — I've seen 'em feed pigs on pines," said the Colonel.

"All the Nawaub of Lucknow's pigs are fed on pines," Strong whispered to Major Pendennis.

"O, of course," the Major answered. Sir Francis Clavering was, in the meanwhile, endeavouring to make an excuse to his brother guest, for the new comer's condition, and muttered something regarding Altamont, that he was an extraordinary, character, very eccentric, very — had Indian habits — didn't understand the rules of English society — to which old Welbore, a shrewd old gentleman, who drank his wine with great regularity, said, "that seemed pretty clear."

Then, the Colonel seeing Pen's honest face, regarded it for a while with as much steadiness as became his condition; and said, "I know you, too, young fellow. I remember you.

Baymouth ball, by Jingo. Wanted to fight the Frenchman. I remember you;" and he laughed, and he squared with his fists, and seemed hugely amused in the drunken depths of his mind, as these recollections passed, or, rather, reeled across it.

"Mr. Pendennis, you remember Colonel Altamont, at Baymouth?" Strong said: upon which Pen, bowing rather stiffly, said, "he had the pleasure of remembering that circumstance perfectly."

"*What's his name?*" cried the Colonel. Strong named Mr. Pendennis again.

"Pendennis! — Pendennis be hanged!" Altamont roared out to the surprise of every one, and thumping with his fist on the table.

"My name is also Pendennis, Sir," said the Major, whose dignity was exceedingly mortified by the evening's events — that he, Major Pendennis, should have been asked to such a party, and that a drunken man should have been introduced to it. "My name is Pendennis, and I will be obliged to you not to curse it too loudly."

The tipsy man turned round to look at him, and as he looked, it appeared as if Colonel Altamont suddenly grew sober. He put his hand across his forehead, and in doing so, displaced somewhat the black wig which he wore; and his eyes stared fiercely at the Major, who, in his turn, like a resolute old warrior as he was, looked at his opponent very keenly and steadily. At the end of the mutual inspection, Altamont began to button up his brass-buttoned coat, and rising up from his chair, suddenly, and to the company's astonishment, reeled towards the door, and issued from it, followed by Strong: all that the latter heard him utter was — "Captain Beak! Captain Beak, by Jingo!"

There had not passed above a quarter of an hour from his strange appearance to his equally sudden departure. The

two young men and the baronet's other guest wondered at the scene, and could find no explanation for it. Clavering seemed exceedingly pale and agitated, and turned with looks of almost terror towards Major Pendennis. The latter had been eyeing his host keenly for a moment or two. "Do you know him?" asked Sir Francis of the Major.

"I am sure I have seen the fellow," the Major replied, looking as if he, too, was puzzled. "Yes, I have it. He was a deserter from the Horse Artillery who got into the Nawaub's service. I remember his face quite well."

"Oh!" said Clavering, with a sigh which indicated immense relief of mind, and the Major looked at him with a twinkle of his sharp old eyes. The cab which Strong had desired to be called, drove away with the Chevalier and Colonel Altamont; coffee was brought to the remaining gentlemen, and they went up stairs to the ladies in the drawing-room, Foker declaring confidentially to Pen that "this was the rummest go he ever saw," which decision Pen said, laughing, "showed great discrimination on Mr. Foker's part."

Then, according to her promise, Miss Amory made music for the young men. Foker was enraptured with her performance, and kindly joined in the airs which she sang, when he happened to be acquainted with them. Pen affected to talk aside with others of the party, but Blanche brought him quickly to the piano, by singing some of his own words, those which we have given in a previous number, indeed, and which the sylphide had herself, she said, set to music. I don't know whether the air was hers, or how much of it was arranged for her by Signor Twankidillo, from whom she took lessons: but good or bad, original or otherwise, it delighted Mr. Pen, who remained by her side, and turned the leaves now for her most assiduously — "Gad! how I wish I could write verses like you, Pen," Foker sighed afterwards to his

companion. "If I could do 'em, wouldn't I, that's all? But I never was a dab at writing, you see, and I'm sorry I was so idle when I was at school."

No mention was made before the ladies of the curious little scene which had been transacted below stairs; although Pen was just on the point of describing it to Miss Amory, when that young lady inquired for Captain Strong, who she wished should join her in a duet. But chancing to look up towards Sir Francis Clavering, Arthur saw a peculiar expression of alarm in the baronet's ordinarily vacuous face, and discreetly held his tongue. It was rather a dull evening. Welbore went to sleep as he always did at music and after dinner: nor did Major Pendennis entertain the ladies with copious anecdotes and endless little scandalous stories, as his wont was, but sate silent for the most part, and appeared to be listening to the music, and watching the fair young performer.

The hour of departure having arrived, the Major rose, regretting that so delightful an evening should have passed away so quickly, and addressed a particularly fine compliment to Miss Amory, upon her splendid talents as a singer. "Your daughter, Lady Clavering," he said to that lady, "is a perfect nightingale — a perfect nightingale, begad! I have scarcely ever heard anything equal to her, and her pronunciation of every language — begad, of every language — seems to me to be perfect; and the best houses in London must open before a young lady who has such talents, and, allow an old fellow to say, Miss Amory, such a face."

Blanche was as much astonished by these compliments as Pen was, to whom his uncle, a little time since, had been speaking in very disparaging terms of the Sylph. The Major and the two young men walked home together, after Mr. Foker had placed his mother in her carriage, and procured a light for an enormous cigar.

The young gentleman's company or his tobacco did not appear to be agreeable to Major Pendennis, who eyed him askance several times, and with a look which plainly indicated that he wished Mr. Foker would take his leave; but Foker hung on resolutely to the uncle and nephew, even until they came to the former's door in Bury Street, where the Major wished the lads good night.

"And I say, Pen," he said in a confidential whisper, calling his nephew back, "mind you make a point of calling in Grosvenor Place to-morrow. They've been uncommonly civil; mons'ously civil and kind."

Pen promised and wondered, and the Major's door having been closed upon him by Morgan, Foker took Pen's arm, and walked with him for some time silently puffing his cigar. At last, when they had reached Charing Cross on Arthur's way home to the Temple, Harry Foker relieved himself, and broke out with that eulogium upon poetry, and those regrets regarding a misspent youth which have just been mentioned. And all the way along the Strand, and up to the door of Pen's very staircase, in Lamb Court, Temple, young Harry Foker did not cease to speak about singing and Blanche Amory.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Relates to Mr. Harry Foker's affairs.

SINCE that fatal but delightful night in Grosvenor Place, Mr. Harry Foker's heart had been in such a state of agitation as you would hardly have thought so great a philosopher could endure. When we remember what good advice he had given to Pen in former days, how an early wisdom and knowledge of the world had manifested itself in the gifted youth; how a

constant course of self-indulgence, such as becomes a gentleman of his means and expectations, ought by right to have increased his cynicism, and made him, with every succeeding day of his life, care less and less for every individual in the world, with the single exception of Mr. Harry Foker, one may wonder that he should fall into the mishap to which most of us are subject once or twice in our lives, and disquiet his great mind about a woman. But Foker, thought early wise was still a man. He could no more escape the common lot than Achilles, or Ajax, or Lord Nelson, or Adam our first father, and now, his time being come, young Harry became a victim to Love, the All-conqueror.

When he went to the Back Kitchen that night after quitting Arthur Pendennis at his staircase-door in Lamb Court, the gin-twist and devilled turkey had no charms for him, the jokes of his companions fell flatly on his ear; and when Mr. Hodgen, the singer of "The Body Snatcher," had a new chant even more dreadful and humorous than that famous composition, Foker, although he appeared his friend, and said "Bravo Hodgen," as common politeness, and his position as one of the chiefs of the Back Kitchen bound him to do, yet never distinctly heard one word of the song, which under its title of "The Cat in the Cupboard," Hodgen has since rendered so famous. Late and very tired, he slipped into his private apartments at home and sought the downy pillow, but his slumbers were disturbed by the fever of his soul, and the very instant that he woke from his agitated sleep, the image of Miss Amory presented itself to him, and said, "Here I am, I am your princess and beauty, you have discovered me, and shall care for nothing else hereafter."

Heavens, how stale and distasteful his former pursuits and friendships appeared to him! He had not been, up to the present time, much accustomed to the society of females of

his own rank in life. When he spoke of such, he called them "modest women." That virtue which, let us hope they possessed, had not hitherto compensated to Mr. Foker for the absence of more lively qualities which most of his own relatives did not enjoy, and which he found in Mesdemoiselles, the ladies of the theatre. His mother, though good and tender, did not amuse her boy; his cousins, the daughters of his maternal uncle, the respectable Earl of Rosherville, wearied him beyond measure. One was blue, and a geologist; one was a horsewoman, and smoked cigars; one was exceedingly Low Church, and had the most heterodox views on religious matters; at least, so the other said, who was herself of the very Highest Church faction, and made the cupboard in her room into an oratory, and fasted on every Friday in the year. Their paternal house of Drummington, Foker could very seldom be got to visit. He swore he had rather go the tread-mill than stay there. He was not much beloved by the inhabitants. Lord Erith, Lord Rosherville's heir, considered his cousin a low person, of deplorably vulgar habits and manners; while Foker, and with equal reason, voted Erith a prig and a dullard, the nightcap of the House of Commons, the Speaker's opprobrium, the dreariest of philanthropic spouters. Nor could George Robert, Earl of Gravesend and Rosherville, ever forget that on one evening when he condescended to play at billiards with his nephew, that young gentleman poked his lordship in the side with his cue, and said, "Well, old cock, I've seen many a bad stroke in my life, but I never saw such a bad one as that there." He played the game out with angelic sweetness of temper, for Harry was his guest as well as his nephew; but he was nearly having a fit in the night; and he kept to his own rooms until young Harry quitted Drummington on his return to Oxbridge, where the interesting youth was finishing his education at the time when the

occurrence took place. It was an awful blow to the venerable earl; the circumstance was never alluded to in the family; he shunned Foker whenever he came to see them in London or in the country, and could hardly be brought to gasp out a "How d'ye do?" to the young blasphemer. But he would not break his sister Agnes's heart, by banishing Harry from the family altogether; nor, indeed, could he afford to break with Mr. Foker, senior, between whom and his lordship there had been many private transactions, producing an exchange of bank cheques from Mr. Foker, and autographs from the earl himself, with the letters I O U written over his illustrious signature.

Besides the four daughters of Lord Gravesend whose various qualities have been enumerated in the former paragraph, his lordship was blessed with a fifth girl, the Lady Ann Milton, who, from her earliest years and nursery, had been destined to a peculiar position in life. It was ordained between her parents and her aunt, that when Mr. Harry Foker attained a proper age, Lady Ann should become his wife. The idea had been familiar to her mind when she yet wore pinafores, and when Harry, the dirtiest of little boys, used to come back with black eyes from school to Drummington, or to his father's house of Logwood, where Lady Ann lived much with her aunt. Both of the young people coincided with the arrangement proposed by the elders, without any protests or difficulty. It no more entered Lady Ann's mind to question the order of her father, than it would have entered Esther's to dispute the commands of Ahasuerus. The heir-apparent of the house of Foker was also obedient, for when the old gentleman said, "Harry, your uncle and I have agreed that when you 're of a proper age, you 'll marry Lady Ann. She won't have any money, but she 's good blood, and a good one to look at, and I shall make you comfortable. If you refuse,

you'll have your mother's jointure, and two hundred a year during my life" — Harry, who knew that his sire, though a man of few words, was yet implicitly to be trusted, acquiesced at once in the parental decree, and said, "Well, Sir, if Ann's agreeable, I say ditto. She's not a bad-looking girl."

"And she has the best blood in England, Sir. Your mother's blood, your own blood, Sir," said the Brewer. "There's nothing like it, Sir."

"Well, Sir, as you like it," Harry replied. "When you want me, please ring the bell. Only there's no hurry, and I hope you'll give us a long day. I should like to have my fling out before I marry."

"Fling away, Harry," answered the benevolent father. "Nobody prevents you, do they?" And so very little more was said upon this subject, and Mr. Harry pursued those amusements in life which suited him best; and hung up a little picture of his cousin in his sitting-room, amidst the French prints, the favourite actresses and dancers, the racing and coaching works of art, which suited his taste and formed his gallery. It was an insignificant little picture, representing a simple round face with ringlets; and it made, as it must be confessed, a very poor figure by the side of Mademoiselle Petitot, dancing over a rainbow, or Mademoiselle Redowa, grinning in red boots and a lancer's cap.

Being engaged and disposed of, Lady Ann Milton did not go out so much in the world as her sisters: and often stayed at home in London at the parental house in Gaunt Square, when her mamma with the other ladies went abroad. They talked and they danced with one man after another, and the men came and went, and the stories about them were various. But there was only this one story about Ann: she was engaged to Harry Foker: she never was to think about anybody else. It was not a very amusing story.

Well, the instant Foker awoke on the day after Lady Clavering's dinner, there was Blanche's image glaring upon him with its clear grey eyes, and winning smile. There was her tune ringing in his ears, "Yet round about the spot, oft-times I hover, oft-times I hover," which poor Foker began piteously to hum, as he sat up in his bed under the crimson silken coverlet. Opposite him was a French print, of a Turkish lady and her Greek lover, surprised by a venerable Ottoman, the lady's husband; on the other wall, was a French print of a gentleman and lady, riding and kissing each other at the full gallop; all round the chaste bed-room were more French prints, either portraits of gauzy nymphs of the Opera or lovely illustrations of the novels; or mayhap, an English chef-d'œuvre or two, in which Miss Calverley of T. R. E. O. would be represented in tight pantaloons in her favourite page part; or Miss Rougemont as Venus; their value enhanced by the signatures of these ladies, Maria Calverley, or Frederica Rougemont, inscribed underneath the prints in an exquisite facsimile. Such were the pictures in which honest Harry delighted. He was no worse than many of his neighbours; he was an idle jovial kindly fast man about town; and if his rooms were rather profusely decorated with works of French art, so that simple Lady Agnes, his mamma, on entering the apartments where her darling sate enveloped in fragrant clouds of Latakia, was often bewildered by the novelties which she beheld there, why, it must be remembered, that he was richer than most young men, and could better afford to gratify his taste.

A letter from Miss Calverley written in a very *déagé* style of spelling and hand-writing, scrawling freely over the filagree paper, and commencing by calling Mr. Harry, her dear Hokey-pokey-fokey, lay on his bed table by his side, amidst keys, sovereigns, cigar-cases, and a bit of verbena, which Miss

Amory had given him, and reminding him of the arrival of the day when he was "to stand that dinner at the Elephant and Castle, at Richmond, which he had promised;" a card for a private box at Miss Rougemont's approaching benefit, a bundle of tickets for "Ben Budgeon's night, the North Lancashire Pippin, at Martin Faunce's, the Three-cornered Hat, in St. Martin's Lane; where Conkey Sam, Dick the Nailor, and Deadman, (the Worcestershire Nobber,) would put on the gloves, and the lovers of the good old British sport were invited to attend" — these and sundry other memoirs of Mr. Foker's pursuits and pleasure lay on the table by his side when he woke.

Ah! how faint all these pleasures seemed now. What did he care for Conkey Sam or the Worcestershire Nobber? What for the French prints ogling him from all sides of the room; those regular stunning slap-up out-and-outers? And Calverley spelling bad, and calling him Hokey-fokey, confound her impudence! The idea of being engaged to a dinner at the Elephant and Castle at Richmond, with that old woman, (who was seven and thirty years old, if she was a day,) filled his mind with dreary disgust now, instead of that pleasure which he had only yesterday expected to find from the entertainment.

When his fond mamma beheld her boy that morning, she remarked on the pallor of his cheek, and the general gloom of his aspect. "Why do you go on playing billiards at that wicked Spratt's?" Lady Agnes asked. "My dearest child, those billiards will kill you, I'm sure they will."

"It isn't the billiards," Harry said, gloomily.

"Then it's the dreadful Back Kitchen," said the Lady Agnes. "I've often thought, d'you know, Harry, of writing to the landlady, and begging that she would have the kindness to put only very little wine in the negus which you take, and

see that you have your shawl on before you get into your brougham."

"Do, Ma'am. Mrs. Cutts is a most kind motherly woman," Harry said. "But it isn't the Back Kitchen, neither," he added, with a ghastly sigh.

As Lady Agnes never denied her son anything, and fell into all his ways with the fondest acquiescence, she was rewarded by a perfect confidence on young Harry's part, who never thought to disguise from her a knowledge of the haunts which he frequented; and, on the contrary, brought her home choice anecdotes from the clubs and billiard-rooms, which the simple lady relished, if she did not understand. "My son goes to Spratt's," she would say to her confidential friends. "All the young men go to Spratt's after their balls. It is *de rigueur*, my dear; and they play billiards as they used to play macao and hazard in Mr. Fox's time. Yes, my dear father often told me that they sate up *always* until nine o'clock the next morning with Mr. Fox at Brookes's, whom I remember at Drumming-ton, when I was a little girl, in a buff waistcoat and black satin small clothes. My brother Erith never played as a young man, nor sate up late—he had no health for it; but my boy must do as everybody does, you know. Yes, and then he often goes to a place called the Back Kitchen, frequented by all the wits and authors, you know, whom one does not see in society, but whom it is a great privilege and pleasure for Harry to meet, and there he hears the questions of the day discussed; and my dear father often said that it was our duty to encourage literature and he had hoped to see the late Dr. Johnson at Drumming-ton, only Dr. Johnson died. Yes, and Mr. Sheridan came over, and drank a great deal of wine, — everybody drank a great deal of wine in those days, — and papa's wine-merchant's bill was ten times as much as Erith's is, who gets

it as he wants it from Fortnum and Mason's, and doesn't keep any stock at all."

"That was an uncommon good dinner we had yesterday, Ma'am," the artful Harry broke out. "Their clear soup's better than ours. Moufflet will put too much taragon into everything. The supreme de volaille was very good — uncommon, and the sweets were better than Moufflet's sweets. Did you taste the plombière, Ma'am, and the maraschino jelly? Stuningly good that maraschino jelly!"

Lady Agnes expressed her agreement in these, as in almost all other sentiments of her son, who continued the artful conversation, saying,

"Very handsome house that of the Claverings. Furniture, I should say, got up regardless of expense. Magnificent display of plate, Ma'am." The lady assented to all these propositions.

"Very nice people the Claverings."

"Hm!" said Lady Agnes.

"I know what you mean. Lady C. ain't distangy exactly, but she is very good-natured."

"O very," mamma said, who was herself one of the most good-natured of women.

"And Sir Francis, he don't talk much before ladies; but after dinner he comes out uncommon strong, Ma'am — a highly agreeable well-informed man. When will you ask them to dinner? Look out for an early day, Ma'am;" and looking into Lady Agnes's pocket-book, he chose a day only a fortnight hence (an age that fortnight seemed to the young gentleman), when the Claverings were to be invited to Grosvenor-street.

The obedient Lady Agnes wrote the required invitation. She was accustomed to do so without consulting her husband, who had his own society and habits, and who left his wife to

see her own friends alone. Harry looked at the card; but there was an omission in the invitation which did not please him.

"You have not asked Miss Whatdyecallem — Miss Emery, Lady Clavering's daughter."

"O that little creature!" Lady Agnes cried. "No, I think not, Harry."

"We must ask Miss Amory," Foker said. "I — I want to ask Pendennis; and — and he's very sweet upon her. Don't you think she sings very well, Ma'am?"

"I thought her rather forward, and didn't listen to her singing. She only sang at you and Mr. Pendennis, it seemed to me. But I will ask her if you wish, Harry," and so Miss Amory's name was written on the card with her mother's.

This piece of diplomacy being triumphantly executed, Harry embraced his fond parent with the utmost affection, and retired to his own apartments, where he stretched himself on his ottoman, and lay brooding silently, sighing for the day which was to bring the fair Miss Amory under his paternal roof, and devising a hundred wild schemes for meeting her.

On his return from making the grand tour, Mr. Foker, junior, had brought with him a polyglot valet, who took the place of Stoopid, and condescended to wait at dinner, attired in shirt fronts of worked muslin, with many gold studs and chains, upon his master and the elders of the family. This man, who was of no particular country, and spoke all languages indifferently ill, made himself useful to Mr. Harry in a variety of ways, — read all the artless youth's correspondence, knew his favourite haunts and the addresses of his acquaintance, and officiated at the private dinners which the young gentleman gave. As Harry lay upon his sofa after his interview with his mamma, robed in a wonderful dressing-gown, and puffing his pipe in gloomy silence, Anatole, too,

must have remarked that something affected his master's spirits; though he did not betray any ill-bred sympathy with Harry's agitation of mind. When Harry began to dress himself in his out-of-door morning costume: he was very hard indeed to please, and particularly severe and snappish about his toilet: he tried, and cursed, pantaloons of many different stripes, checks, and colours: all the boots were villainously varnished; the shirts too "loud" in pattern. He scented his linen and person with peculiar richness this day; and what must have been the valet's astonishment, when, after some blushing and hesitation on Harry's part, the young gentleman asked, "I say, Anatole, when I engaged you, didn't you — hem — didn't you say that you could dress — hem — dress hair?"

The valet said, "Yes, he could."

"Cherchy alors une paire de tongs, — et — curly moi un peu," Mr. Foker said, in a easy manner; and the valet, wondering whether his master was in love or was going masquerading, went in search of the articles, — first from the old butler who waited upon Mr. Foker, senior, on whose bald pate the tongs would have scarcely found a hundred hairs to seize, and finally of the lady who had the charge of the meek auburn fronts of the Lady Agnes. And the tongs being got, Monsieur Anatole twisted his young master's locks until he had made Harry's head as curly as a negro's; after which the youth dressed himself with the utmost care and splendour, and proceeded to sally out.

"At what dime sall I order de drag, Sir, to be to Miss Calverley's door, Sir?" the attendant whispered as his master was going forth.

"Confound her! — Put the dinner off — I can't go!" said Foker. "No, hang it — I must go. Poyntz and Rougemont,

and ever so many more are coming. The drag at Pelham Corner at six o'clock, Anatole."

The drag was not one of Mr. Foker's own equipages, but was hired from a livery stable for festive purposes; Foker, however, put his own carriage into requisition that morning, and for what purpose does the kind reader suppose? Why to drive down to Lamb Court, Temple, taking Grosvenor Place by the way (which lies in the exact direction of the Temple from Grosvenor Street, as everybody knows), where he just had the pleasure of peeping upwards at Miss Amory's pink window curtains, having achieved which satisfactory feat, he drove off to Pen's chambers. Why did he want to see his dear friend Pen so much? Why did he yearn and long after him; and did it seem necessary to Foker's very existence that he should see Pen that morning, having parted with him in perfect health on the night previous? Pen had lived two years in London, and Foker had not paid half-a-dozen visits to his chambers. What sent him thither now in such a hurry?

What? — If any young ladies read this page, I have only to inform them that when the same mishap befalls them, which now had for more than twelve hours befallen Harry Foker, people will grow interesting to them for whom they did not care sixpence on the day before; as on the other hand persons of whom they fancied themselves fond will be found to have become insipid and disagreeable. Then your dearest Eliza or Maria of the other day, to whom you wrote letters and sent locks of hair yards long, will on a sudden be as indifferent to you as your stupidest relation: whilst, on the contrary, about *his* relations you will begin to feel such a warm interest! such a loving desire to ingratiate yourself with *his* mamma; such a liking for that dear kind old man *his* father! If He is in the habit of visiting at any house, what advances you will make in

order to visit there too. If He has a married sister you will like to spend long mornings with her. You will fatigue your servant by sending notes to her, for which there will be the most pressing occasion, twice or thrice in a day. You will cry if your mamma objects to your going too often to see His family. The only one of them you will dislike, is perhaps his younger brother, who is at home for the holidays, and who will persist in staying in the room when you come to see your dear new-found friend, his darling second sister. Something like this will happen to you, young ladies, or, at any rate, let us hope it may. Yes, you must go through the hot fits and the cold fits of that pretty fever. Your mothers, if they would acknowledge it, have passed through it before you were born, your dear papa being the object of the passion of course, — who could it be but he? And as you suffer it, so will your brothers, in their way, — and after their kind. More selfish than you: more eager and headstrong than you: they will rush on their destiny when the doomed charmer makes her appearance. Or if they don't, and you don't, Heaven help you! As the gambler said of his dice, to love and win is the best thing, to love and lose is the next best. You don't die of the complaint: or very few do. The generous wounded heart suffers and survives it. And he is not a man, or she a woman, who is not conquered by it, or who does not conquer it in his time. . . Now, then, if you ask why Henry Foker, Esquire, was in such a hurry to see Arthur Pendennis, and felt such a sudden value and esteem for him, there is no difficulty in saying it was because Pen had become really valuable in Mr. Foker's eyes: because if Pen was not the rose, he yet had been near that fragrant flower of love. Was not he in the habit of going to her house in London? Did he not live near her in the country? — know all about the enchantress? What, I wonder, would Lady Ann Milton, Mr. Foker's cousin and

prétendue, have said, if her ladyship had known all that was going on in the bosom of that funny little gentleman?

Alas! when Foker reached Lamb Court, leaving his carriage for the admiration of the little clerks who were lounging in the arch-way that leads thence into Flag Court which leads into Upper-Temple Lane, Warrington was in the chambers but Pen was absent. Pen was gone to the printing-office to see his proofs. "Would Foker have a pipe, and should the laundress go to the Cock and get him some beer?" — Warrington asked, remarking with a pleased surprise the splendid toilet of this scented and shiny-booted young aristocrat; but Foker had not the slightest wish for beer or tobacco: he had very important business: he rushed away to the "Pall-Mall Gazette" office, still bent upon finding Pen. Pen had quitted that place. Foker wanted him that they might go together to call upon Lady Clavering. Foker went away disconsolate, and whiled away an hour or two vaguely at clubs: and when it was time to pay a visit, he thought it would be but decent and polite to drive to Grosvenor Place and leave a card upon Lady Clavering. He had not the courage to ask to see her when the door was opened, he only delivered two cards, with Mr. Henry Foker engraved upon them, to Jeames, in a speechless agony. Jeames received the tickets bowing his powdered head. The varnished doors closed upon him. The beloved object was as far as ever from him, though so near. He thought he heard the tones of a piano and of a syren singing, coming from the drawing-room and sweeping over the balcony-shrubbery of geraniums. He would have liked to stop and listen, but it might not be. "Drive to Tattersall's," he said to the groom, in a voice smothered with emotion, — "And bring my pony round," he added, as the man drove rapidly away.

As good luck would have it, that splendid barouche of

Lady Clavering's, which has been inadequately described in a former chapter, drove up to her ladyship's door just as Foker mounted the pony which was in waiting for him. He bestrode the fiery animal, and dodged about the arch of the Green Park, keeping the carriage well in view, until he saw Lady Clavering enter, and with her — whose could be that angel form, but the enchantress's, clad in a sort of gossamer, with a pink bonnet and a light-blue parasol, — but Miss Amory?

The carriage took its fair owners to Madame Rigodon's cap and lace shop, to Mrs. Wolsey's Berlin Worsted shop, — who knows to what other resorts of female commerce? Then it went and took ices at Hunter's, for Lady Clavering was somewhat florid in her tastes and amusements, and not only liked to go abroad in the most showy carriage in London, but that the public should see her in it too. And so, in a white bonnet with a yellow feather, she ate a large pink ice in the sunshine before Hunter's door, till Foker on his pony, and the red jacket who accompanied him, were almost tired of dodging.

Then at last she made her way into the Park, and the rapid Foker made his dash forward. What to do? Just to get a nod of recognition from Miss Amory and her mother; to cross them a half-dozen times in the drive; to watch and ogle them from the other side of the ditch, where the horsemen assemble when the band plays in Kensington Gardens. What is the use of looking at a woman in a pink bonnet across a ditch? What is the earthly good to be got out of a nod of the head? Strange that men will be contented with such pleasures, or if not contented, at least that they will be so eager in seeking them. Not one word did Harry, he so fluent of conversation ordinarily, change with his charmer on that day. Mutely he beheld her return to her carriage, and drive away among rather ironical salutes from the young men in the Park.

One said that the Indian widow was making the paternal rupees spin rapidly; another said that she ought to have burned herself alive, and left the money to her daughter. This one asked who Clavering was? — and old Tom Eales, who knew everybody, and never missed a day in the Park on his grey cob, kindly said that Clavering had come into an estate over head and heels in mortgage: that there were dev'lish ugly stories about him when he was a young man, and that it was reported of him that he had a share in a gambling house, and had certainly shown the white feather in his regiment. "He plays still; he is in a hell every night almost," Mr. Eales added.

"I should think so, since his marriage," said a wag.

"He gives devilish good dinners," said Foker, striking up for the honour of his host of yesterday.

"I daresay, and I daresay he doesn't ask Eales," the wag said. "I say, Eales, do you dine at Clavering's, — at the Begum's?"

"I dine there?" said Mr. Eales, who would have dined with Beelzebub if sure of a good cook, and when he came away, would have painted his host blacker than fate had made him.

"You might, you know, although you *do* abuse him so," continued the wag. "They say it's very pleasant. Clavering goes to sleep after dinner; the Begum gets tipsy with cherry-brandy, and the young lady sings songs to the young gentlemen. She sings well, don't she, Fo?"

"Slap up," said Fo. "I tell you what, Poyntz, she sings like a — whatdyecallum — you know what I mean — like a mermaid, you know, but that's not their name."

"I never heard a mermaid sing," Mr. Poyntz, the wag replied. "Who ever heard a mermaid? Eales, you are an old fellow, did you?"

"Don't make a lark of me, hang it, Poyntz," said Foker, turning red, and with tears almost in his eyes, "you know what I mean: it's those what 's-his-names — in Homer, you know. I never said I was a good scholar."

"And nobody ever said it of you, my boy," Mr. Poyntz remarked, and Foker striking spurs into his pony, cantered away down Rotten Row, his mind agitated with various emotions, ambitions, mortifications. He *was* sorry that he had not been good at his books in early life — that he might have cut out all those chaps who were about her, and who talked the languages, and wrote poetry, and painted pictures in her album, and — and that. — "What am I," thought little Foker, "compared to her? She's all soul, she is, and can write poetry or compose music, as easy as I could drink a glass of beer. Beer? — damme, that's all I'm fit for, is beer. I am a poor, ignorant little beggar, good for nothing but Foker's Entire. I misspent my youth, and used to get the chaps to do my exercises. And what's the consequences now? O, Harry Foker, what a confounded little fool you have been!"

As he made this dreary soliloquy, he had cantered out of Rotten Row into the Park, and there was on the point of riding down a large old roomy family carriage, of which he took no heed, when a cheery voice cried out, "Harry, Harry!" and looking up, he beheld his aunt, the Lady Rosherville, and two of her daughters, of whom the one who spoke was Harry's betrothed, the Lady Ann.

He started back with a pale, scared look, as a truth about which he had not thought during the whole day, came across him. *There* was his fate, there, in the back seat of that carriage.

"What is the matter, Harry? why are you so pale? You

have been raking and smoking too much, you wicked boy," said Lady Ann.

Foker said, "How do, aunt," "How do, Ann," in a perturbed manner — muttered something about a pressing engagement, — indeed he saw by the Park clock that he must have been keeping his party in the drag waiting for nearly an hour — and waved a good-bye. The little man and the little pony were out of sight in an instant — the great carriage rolled away. Nobody inside was very much interested about his coming or going; the Countess being occupied with her spaniel, the Lady Lucy's thoughts and eyes being turned upon a volume of sermons, and those of Lady Ann upon a new novel, which the sisters had just procured from the library.

CHAPTER XIX.

Carries the reader both to Richmond and Greenwich.

POOR Foker found the dinner at Richmond to be the most dreary entertainment upon which ever mortal man wasted his guineas. "I wonder how the deuce I could ever have liked these people," he thought in his own mind. "Why, I can see the crow's-feet under Rougemont's eyes, and the paint on her cheeks is laid on as thick as Clown's in a pantomime! The way in which that Calverley talks slang, is quite disgusting. I hate chaff in a woman. And old Colchicum! that old Col, coming down here in his brougham, with his coronet on it, and sitting bodkin between Mademoiselle Coralie and her mother! It's too bad. An English peer, and a horse-rider of Franconi's! — It won't do; by Jove, it won't do. I ain't proud; but it will *not* do!"

"Twopence-halfpenny for your thoughts, Fokey!" cried out Miss Rougemont, taking her cigar from her truly vermilion

lips, as she beheld the young fellow lost in thought, seated at the head of his table, amidst melting ices, and cut pine-apples, and bottles full and empty, and cigar-ashes scattered on fruit, and the ruins of a dessert which had no pleasure for him.

"Does Foker ever think?" drawled out Mr. Poyntz. "Foker, here is a considerable sum of money offered by a fair capitalist at this end of the table for the present emanations of your valuable and acute intellect, old boy!"

"What the deuce is that Poyntz a talking about?" Mrs. Calverley asked of her neighbour. "I hate him. He 's a drawlin', sneerin' beast."

"What a droll of a little man is that little Fokare, my lor," Mademoiselle Coralie said, in her own language, and with the rich twang of that sunny Gascony in which her swarthy cheeks and bright black eyes had got their fire. "What a droll of a man! He does not look to have twenty years."

"I wish I were of his age," said the venerable Colchicum, with a sigh, as he inclined his purple face towards a large goblet of claret.

"*C'est Jeunesse. Peuh! je m'en fiche,*" said Madame Brack, Coralie's mamma, taking a great pinch out of Lord Colchicum's delicate gold snuff-box. "*Je n'aime que les hommes faits, moi. Comme milor. Coralie! n'est ce pas que tu n'aimes que les hommes faits, ma bichette?*"

My lord said, with a grin, "You flatter me, Madame Brack."

"*Taisez vous, Maman, vous n'êtes qu'une bête,*" Coralie cried, with a shrug of her robust shoulders; upon which, my lord said that *she* did not flatter at any rate; and pocketed his snuff-box, not desirous that Madame Brack's dubious fingers should plunge too frequently into his Mackabaw.

There is no need to give a prolonged detail of the animated conversation which ensued during the rest of the banquet; a conversation which would not much edify the reader. And

it is scarcely necessary to say, that all ladies of the *corps de danse* are not like Miss Calverley, any more than that all peers resemble that illustrious member of their order, the late lamented Viscount Colchicum. But there have been such in our memories who have loved the society of riotous youth better than the company of men of their own age and rank, and have given the young ones the precious benefit of their experience and example; and there have been very respectable men too who have not objected so much to the kind of entertainment as to the publicity of it. I am sure, for instance, that our friend Major Pendennis would have made no sort of objection to join a party of pleasure, provided that it were *en petit comité*, and that such men as my Lord Steyne and my Lord Colchicum were of the society. "Give the young men their pleasures," this worthy guardian said to Pen more than once. "I'm not one of your straight-laced moralists, but an old man of the world, begad; and I know that as long as it lasts, young men will be young men." And there were some young men to whom this estimable philosopher accorded about seventy years as the proper period for sowing their wild oats: but they were men of fashion.

Mr. Foker drove his lovely guests home to Brompton in the drag that night; but he was quite thoughtful and gloomy during the whole of the little journey from Richmond; neither listening to the jokes of the friends behind him and on the box by his side, nor enlivening them, as was his wont, by his own facetious sallies. And when the ladies whom he had conveyed alighted at the door of their house, and asked their accomplished coachman whether he would not step in and take something to drink, he declined with so melancholy an air, that they supposed that the Governor and he had had a difference, or that some calamity had befallen him; and he did not tell these people what the cause of his grief was, but left

Mesdames Rougemont and Calverley, unheeding the cries of the latter, who hung over her balcony like Jezebel, and called out to him to ask him to give another party soon.

He sent the drag home under the guidance of one of the grooms, and went on foot himself; his hands in his pockets, plunged in thought. The stars and moon shining tranquilly over head, looked down upon Mr. Foker that night, as he in his turn sentimentally regarded them. And he went and gazed upwards at the house in Grosvenor Place, and at the windows which he supposed to be those of the beloved object; and he moaned and he sighed in a way piteous and surprising to witness, which Policeman X did, who informed Sir Francis Clavering's people, as they took the refreshment of beer on the coach-box at the neighbouring public-house, after bringing home their lady from the French play, that there had been another chap hanging about the premises that evening — a little chap, dressed like a swell.

And now with that perspicuity and ingenuity and enterprise which only belongs to a certain passion, Mr. Foker began to dodge Miss Amory through London, and to appear wherever he could meet her. If Lady Clavering went to the French play, where her ladyship had a box, Mr. Foker, whose knowledge of the language, as we have heard, was not conspicuous, appeared in a stall. He found out where her engagements were (it is possible that Anatole, his man, was acquainted with Sir Francis Clavering's gentleman, and so got a sight of her ladyship's engagement-book), and at many of these evening parties Mr. Foker made his appearance — to the surprise of the world, and of his mother especially, whom he ordered to apply for cards to these parties, for which until now he had shown a supreme contempt. He told the pleased and unsuspecting lady that he went to parties because it was right for him to see the world: he told her that he went

to the French play because he wanted to perfect himself in the language, and there was no such good lesson as a comedy or vaudeville, — and when one night the astonished Lady Agnes saw him stand up and dance, and complimented him upon his elegance and activity, the mendacious little rogue asserted that he had learned to dance in Paris, whereas Anatole knew that his young master used to go off privily to an academy in Brewer Street, and study there for some hours in the morning. The casino of our modern days was not invented, or was in its infancy as yet; and gentlemen of Mr. Foker's time had not the facilities of acquiring the science of dancing which are enjoyed by our present youth.

Old Pendennis seldom missed going to church. He considered it to be his duty as a gentleman to patronise the institution of public worship, and that it was quite a correct thing to be seen at church of a Sunday. One day it chanced that he and Arthur went thither together: the latter, who was now in high favour, had been to breakfast with his uncle, from whose lodging they walked across the park to a church not far from Belgrave Square. There was a charity sermon at Saint James's, as the Major knew by the bills posted on the pillars of his parish church, which probably caused him, for he was a thrifty man, to forsake it for that day: besides he had other views for himself and Pen. "We will go to church, Sir, across the Park; and then, begad, we will go to the Clavering's house, and ask them for lunch in a friendly way. Lady Clavering likes to be asked for lunch, and is uncommonly kind, and monstrous hospitable."

"I met them at dinner last week, at Lady Agnes Foker's, Sir," Pen said, "and the Begum was very kind indeed. So she was in the country: so she is everywhere. But I share your opinion about Miss Amory; one of your opinions, that

is, uncle, for you were changing, the last time we spoke about her."

"And what do you think of her now?" the elder said.

"I think her the most confounded little flirt in London," Pen answered, laughing. "She made a tremendous assault upon Harry Foker, who sat next to her; and to whom she gave all the talk, though I took her down."

"Bah! Henry Foker is engaged to his cousin, all the world knows it: not a bad coup of Lady Rosherville's, that. I should say, that the young man at his father's death, and old Mr. Foker's life 's devilish bad: you know he had a fit, at Arthur's, last year: I should say, that young Foker won't have less than fourteen thousand a year from the brewery, besides Logwood and the Norfolk property. I 've no pride about *me*, Pen. I like a man of birth certainly, but dammy, I like a brewery which brings in a man fourteen thousand a year; hey, Pen? Ha, ha, that 's the sort of man for me. And I recommend you now that you are *lancéd* in the world, to stick to fellows of that sort; to fellows who have a stake in the country, begad."

"Foker sticks to me, Sir," Arthur answered. "He has been at our chambers several times lately. He has asked me to dinner. We are almost as great friends, as we used to be in our youth: and his talk is about Blanche Amory from morning till night. I'm sure he 's sweet upon her."

"I'm sure he is engaged to his cousin, and that they will keep the young man to his bargain," said the Major. "The marriages in these families are affairs of state. Lady Agnes was made to marry old Foker by the late Lord, although she was notoriously partial to her cousin who was killed at Albuera afterwards, and who saved her life out of the lake at Drummington. I remember Lady Agnes, Sir, an exceedingly fine woman. But what did she do? — of course she married her father's man. Why, Mr. Foker sate for Drummington till the

Reform Bill, and paid dev'lish well for his seat, too. And you may depend upon this, Sir, that Foker senior, who is a parvenu, and loves a great man, as all parvenus do, has ambitious views for his son as well as himself, and that your friend Harry must do as his father bids him. Lord bless you! I've known a hundred cases of love in young men and women: hey, Master Arthur, do you take me? They kick, Sir, they resist, they make a deuce of a riot and that sort of thing, but they end by listening to reason, begad."

"Blanche is a dangerous girl, Sir," Pen said. "I was smitten with her myself once, and very far gone, too," he added; "but that is years ago."

"Were you? How far did it go? Did she return it?" asked the Major, looking hard at Pen.

Pen, with a laugh, said "that at one time he did think he was pretty well in Miss Amory's good graces. But my mother did not like her, and the affair went off." Pen did not think it fit to tell his uncle all the particulars of that courtship which had passed between himself and the young lady.

"A man might go farther and fare worse, Arthur," the Major said, still looking queerly at his nephew.

"Her birth, Sir; her father was the mate of a ship, they say: and she has not money enough," objected Pen, in a dandyfied manner. "What 's ten thousand pound and a girl bred up like her?"

"You use my own words, and it is all very well. But, I tell you in confidence, Pen, — in strict honour, mind, — that it 's my belief she has a devilish deal more than ten thousand pound: and from what I saw of her the other day, and — and have heard of her — I should say she was a devilish accomplished, clever girl; and would make a good wife with a sensible husband."

"How do you know about her money?" Pen asked, smi-

ling. "You seem to have information about everybody, and to know about all the town."

"I do know a few things, Sir, and I don't tell all I know. Mark that," the uncle replied. "And as for that charming Miss Amory, — for charming, begad! she is, — if I saw her Mrs. Arthur Pendennis, I should neither be sorry nor surprised, begad! and if you object to ten thousand pound, what would you say, Sir, to thirty, or forty, or fifty?" and the Major looked still more knowingly, and still harder at Pen.

"Well, Sir," he said, to his godfather and namesake, "make her Mrs. Arthur Pendennis. You can do it as well as I."

"Psha! you are laughing at me, Sir," the other replied, rather peevishly, "and you ought not to laugh so near a church gate. Here we are at St. Benedict's. They say Mr. Oriol is a beautiful preacher."

Indeed, the bells were tolling, the people were trooping into the handsome church, the carriages of the inhabitants of the lordly quarter poured forth their pretty loads of devotees, in whose company Pen and his uncle, ending their edifying conversation, entered the fane. I do not know whether other people carry their worldly affairs to the church door. Arthur, who, from habitual reverence and feeling, was always more than respectful in a place of worship, thought of the incongruity of their talk, perhaps; whilst the old gentleman at his side was utterly unconscious of any such contrast. His hat was brushed: his wig was trim: his neckcloth was perfectly tied. He looked at every soul in the congregation, it is true: the bald heads and the bonnets, the flowers and the feathers: but so demurely that he hardly lifted up his eyes from his book — from his book which he could not read without glasses. As for Pen's gravity, it was sorely put to the test when, upon looking by chance towards the seats where

the servants were collected, he spied out, by the side of a demure gentleman in plush, Henry Foker, Esquire, who had discovered this place of devotion. Following the direction of Harry's eye, which strayed a good deal from his book, Pen found that it alighted upon a yellow bonnet and a pink one: and that these bonnets were on the heads of Lady Clavering and Blanche Amory. If Pen's uncle is not the only man who has talked about his worldly affairs up to the church door, is poor Harry Foker the only who has brought his worldly love into the aisle?

When the congregation issued forth at the conclusion of the service, Foker was out amongst the first, but Pen came up with him presently, as he was hankering about the entrance which he was unwilling to leave, until my lady's barouche, with the bewigged coachman, had borne away its mistress and her daughter from their devotions.

When the two ladies came out, they found together the Pendennises, uncle and nephew, and Harry Foker, Esquire, sucking the crook of his stick, standing there in the sunshine. To see and to ask to eat were simultaneous with the good-natured Begum, and she invited the three gentlemen to luncheon straightway.

Blanche was, too, particularly gracious. "O! do come," she said to Arthur, "if you are not too great a man. I want so to talk to you about" — but we mustn't say what, *here*, you know. What would Mr. Oriel say?" And the young devotee jumped into the carriage after her mamma. — "I've read every word of it. It's *adorable*," she added, still addressing herself to Pen.

"I know *who* is," said Mr. Arthur, making rather a pert bow.

"What 's the row about?" asked Mr. Foker, rather puzzled.

"I suppose Miss Clavering means 'Walter Lorraine,'" said the Major, looking knowing, and nodding at Pen.

"I suppose so, Sir. There was a famous review in the Pall Mall this morning. It was Warrington's doing though, and I must not be too proud."

"A review in Pall Mall? — Walter Lorraine? What the doose do you mean?" Foker asked. "Walter Lorraine died of the measles, poor little beggar, when we were at Grey Friars. I remember his mother coming up."

"You are not a literary man, Foker," Pen said, laughing, and hooking his arm into his friend's. "You must know I have been writing a novel, and some of the papers have spoken very well of it. Perhaps you don't read the Sunday papers?"

"I read Bell's Life regular, old boy," Mr. Foker answered: at which Pen laughed again, and the three gentlemen proceeded in great good-humour to Lady Clavering's house.

The subject of the novel was resumed after luncheon by Miss Amory, who indeed loved poets and men of letters if she loved anything, and was sincerely an artist in feeling. Some of the passages in the book made me cry, positively they did, she said.

Pen said, with some fatuity, "I am happy to think I have a part of *vos larmes*, Miss Blanche" — And the Major (who had not read more than six pages of Pen's book) put on his sanctified look, saying, "Yes, there are some passages quite affecting, mons'ous affecting: and," — "O, if it makes you cry," — Lady Amory declared she would not read it, "that she wouldn't."

"Don't, Mamma," Blanche said, with a French shrug of her shoulders; and then she fell into a rhapsody about the book, about the snatches of poetry interspersed in it, about the two heroines, Leonora and Neara; about the two heroes,

Walter Lorraine and his rival the young Duke — and what good company you introduce us to," said the young lady, archly, "*quel ton!* How much of your life have you passed at court, and are you a prime minister's son, Mr. Arthur?"

Pen began to laugh — "It is as cheap for a novelist to create a Duke as to make a Baronet," he said. "Shall I tell you a secret, Miss Amory? I promoted all my characters at the request of the publisher. The young Duke was only a young Baron when the novel was first written; his false friend the Viscount, was a simple commoner, and so on with all the characters of the story."

"What a wicked, satirical, pert young man you have become! *Comme vous voilà formé!*" said the young lady. "How different from Arthur Pendennis of the country! Ah! I think I like Arthur Pendennis of the country best, though!" and she gave him the full benefit of her eyes, — both of the fond appealing glance into his own, and of the modest look downwards towards the carpet, which showed off her dark eyelids and long fringed lashes.

Pen of course protested that he had not changed in the least, to which the young lady replied by a tender sigh; and thinking that she had done quite enough to make Arthur happy or miserable (as the case might be), she proceeded to cajole his companion, Mr. Harry Foker, who during the literary conversation had sate silently imbibing the head of his cane, and wishing that he was a clever chap like that Pen.

If the Major thought that by telling Miss Amory of Mr. Foker's engagement to his cousin, Lady Ann Milton (which information the old gentleman neatly conveyed to the girl as he sate by her side at luncheon below stairs), — if, we say, the Major thought that the knowledge of this fact would prevent Blanche from paying any further attention to the young heir of Foker's Entire, he was entirely mistaken. She

became only the more gracious to Foker: she praised him, and everything belonging to him; she praised his mamma; she praised the pony which he rode in the Park; she praised the lovely breloques or gimcracks which the young gentleman wore at his watch-chain, and that dear little darling of a cane, and those dear little delicious monkeys' heads with ruby eyes, which ornamented Harry's shirt, and formed the buttons of his waistcoat. And then, having praised and coaxed the weak youth until he blushed and tingled with pleasure, and until Pen thought she really had gone quite far enough, she took another theme.

"I am afraid Mr. Foker is a very sad young man," she said, turning round to Pen.

"He does not look so," Pen answered with a sneer.

"I mean we have heard sad stories about him. Haven't we, Mamma? What was Mr. Poyntz saying here, the other day, about that party at Richmond? O you naughty creature!" But here, seeing that Harry's countenance assumed a great expression of alarm, while Pen's wore a look of amusement, she turned to the latter and said, "I believe you are just as bad: I believe you would have liked to have been there, — wouldn't you? I know you would: yes — and so should I."

"Lor, Blanche!" Mamma cried.

"Well, I would. I never saw an actress in my life. I would give anything to know one; for I adore talent. And I adore Richmond, that I do; and I adore Greenwich, and I say, I *should* like to go there."

"Why should not we three bachelors," the Major here broke out, gallantly, and to his nephew's special surprise, "beg these ladies to honour us with their company at Greenwich? Is Lady Clavering to go on for ever being hospitable to us, and may we make no return? Speak for yourselves, young men, — eh, begad! Here is my nephew, with his pockets full of money

— his pockets full, begged! and Mr. Henry Foker, who, as I have heard say, is pretty well to do in the world, — how is your lovely cousin, Lady Ann, Mr. Foker? — here are these two young ones, — and they allow an old fellow like me to speak. Lady Clavering, will you do me the favour to be my guest? and Miss Blanche shall be Arthur's, if she will be so good."

"O delightful," cried Blanche.

"I like a bit of fun too," said Lady Clavering; "and we will take some day when Sir Francis —"

"When Sir Francis dines out, — yes Mamma," the daughter said, "it will be charming."

And a charming day it was. The dinner was ordered at Greenwich, and Foker, though he did not invite Miss Amory, had some delicious opportunities of conversation with her during the repast, and afterwards on the balcony of their room at the hotel, and again during the drive home in her ladyship's barouche. Pen came down with his uncle, in Sir Hugh Trumpington's brougham, which the Major borrowed for the occasion. "I am an old soldier, begged," he said, "and I learned in early life to make myself comfortable."

And, being an old soldier, he allowed the two young men to pay for the dinner between them, and all the way home in the brougham he rallied Pen about Miss Amory's evident partiality for him: praised her good looks, spirits, and wit: and again told Pen in the strictest confidence, that she would be a devilish deal richer than people thought.

CHAPTER XX.

Contains a novel incident.

SOME account has been given, in a former part of this story, how Mr. Pen, during his residence at home, after his defeat at Oxbridge, had occupied himself with various literary compositions, and amongst other works, had written the greater part of a novel. This book, written under the influence of his youthful embarrassments, amatory and pecuniary, was of a very fierce, gloomy, and passionate sort, — the Byronic despair, the Wertherian despondency, the mocking bitterness of Mephistopheles of Faust, were all reproduced and developed in the character of the hero; for our youth had just been learning the German language, and imitated, as almost all clever lads do, his favourite poets and writers. Passages in the volumes once so loved, and now read so seldom, still bear the mark of the pencil with which he noted them in those days. Tears fell upon the leaf of the book, perhaps, or blistered the pages of his manuscript as the passionate young man dashed his thoughts down. If he took up the books afterwards, he had no ability or wish to sprinkle the leaves with that early dew of former times: his pencil was no longer eager to score its marks of approval: but as he looked over the pages of his manuscript, he remembered what had been the overflowing feelings which had caused him to blot it, and the pain which had inspired the line. If the secret history of books could be written, and the author's private thoughts and meanings noted down alongside of his story, how many insipid volumes would become interesting, and dull tales excite the reader! Many a bitter smile passed over Pen's face as he read his novel, and recalled the time and feelings which gave it birth. How

pompous some of the grand passages appeared; and how weak others were in which he thought he had expressed his full heart! This page was imitated from a then favourite author, as he could now clearly see and confess, though he had believed himself to be writing originally then. As he mused over certain lines he recollected the place and hour where he wrote them: the ghost of the dead feeling came back as he mused, and he blushed to review the faint image. And what meant those blots on the page? As you come in the desert to a ground where camels' hoofs are marked in the clay, and traces of withered herbage are yet visible, you know that water was there once; so the place in Pen's mind was no longer green, and the fons lacrymarum was dried up.

He used this simile one morning to Warrington, as the latter sat over his pipe and book, and Pen, with much gesticulation, according to his wont when excited, and with a bitter laugh, thumped his manuscript down on the table, making the tea-things rattle, and the blue milk dance in the jug. On the previous night he had taken the manuscript out of a long-neglected chest, containing old shooting jackets, old Oxbridge scribbling books, his old surplice, and battered cap and gown, and other memorials of youth, school, and home. He read in the volume in bed until he fell asleep, for the commencement of the tale was somewhat dull, and he had come home tired from a London evening party.

"By Jove!" said Pen, thumping down his papers, "when I think that these were written but very few years ago, I am ashamed of my memory. I wrote this when I believed myself to be eternally in love with that little coquette, Miss Amory. I used to carry down verses to her, and put them into the hollow of a tree, and dedicate them 'Amori.'"

"That was a sweet little play upon words," Warrington remarked, with a puff. "Amory — Amori. It showed pro-

found scholarship. Let us hear a bit of the rubbish." And he stretched over from his easy chair, and caught hold of Pen's manuscript with the fire-tongs, which he was just using in order to put a coal into his pipe. Thus, in possession of the volume, he began to read out from the "Leaves from the life-book of Walter Lorraine."

"'False as thou art beautiful! heartless as thou art fair! mockery of Passion!' Walter cried, addressing Leonora, 'what evil spirit hath sent thee to torture me so? O Leonora ***'"

"Cut that part," cried out Pen, making a dash at the book, which, however, his comrade would not release. "Well! don't read it out at any rate. That's about my other flame, my first — Lady Mirabel that is now. I saw her last night at Lady Whiston's. She asked me to a party at her house, and said that, as old friends, we ought to meet oftener. She has been seeing me any time these two years in town, and never thought of inviting me before; but seeing Wenham talking to me, and Monsieur Dubois, the French literary man; who had a dozen orders on, and might have passed for a Marshal of France, she condescended to invite me. The Claverings are to be there on the same evening. Won't it be exciting to meet one's two flames at the same table?"

"Two flames! — two heaps of burnt-out cinders," Warrington said. "Are both the beauties in this book?"

"Both, or something like them," Pen said. "Leonora, who marries the Duke, is the Fotheringay. I drew the Duke from Magnus Charters, with whom I was at Oxford; it's a little like him; and Miss Amory is Neera. By gad, Warrington, I did love that first woman! I thought of her as I walked home from Lady Whiston's in the moonlight; and the whole early scenes came back to me as if they had been yesterday. And when I got home, I pulled out the story which I

wrote about her and the other three years ago: do you know, outrageous as it is, it has some good stuff in it, and if Bungay won't publish it, I think Bacon will."

"That 's the way of poets," said Warrington. "They fall in love, jilt, or are jilted; they suffer and they cry out that they suffer more than any other mortals: and when they have experienced feelings enough they note them down in a book, and take the book to market. All poets are humbugs, all literary men are humbugs; directly a man begins to sell his feelings for money he 's a humbug. If a poet gets a pain in his side from too good a dinner, he bellows Ai, Ai, louder than Prometheus."

"I suppose a poet has a greater sensibility than another man," said Pen, with some spirit. "That is what makes him a poet. I suppose that he sees and feels more keenly: it is that which makes him speak, of what he feels and sees. You speak eagerly enough in your leading articles when you espy a false argument in an opponent, or detect a quack in the House. Paley, who does not care for any thing else in the world, will talk for an hour about a question of law. Give another the privilege which you take yourself, and the free use of his faculty, and let him be what nature has made him. Why should not a man sell his sentimental thoughts as well as you your political ideas, or Paley his legal knowledge? Each alike is a matter of experience and practice. It is not money which causes you to perceive a fallacy, or Paley to argue a point; but a natural or acquired aptitude for that kind of truth: and a poet sets down his thoughts and experiences upon paper as a painter does a landscape or a face upon canvas, to the best of his ability, and according to his particular gift. If ever I think I have the stuff in me to write an epic, by Jove I will try. If I only feel that I am good enough to crack a joke or tell a story, I will do that."

"Not a bad speech, young one," Warrington said, "but that does not prevent all poets from being humbugs."

"What — Homer, Æschylus, Shakspeare and all?"

"Their names are not to be breathed in the same sentence with you pigmies," Mr. Warrington said; "there are men and men, Sir."

"Well, Shakspeare was a man who wrote for money, just as you and I do," Pen answered, at which Warrington confounded his impudence, and resumed his pipe and his manuscript.

There was not the slightest doubt then that this document contained a great deal of Pen's personal experiences, and that "Leaves from the life-book of Walter Lorraine" would never have been written but for Arthur Pendennis's own private griefs, passions, and follies. As we have become acquainted with these in the first volume of his biography, it will not be necessary to make large extracts from the novel of "Walter Lorraine," in which the young gentleman had depicted such of them as he thought were likely to interest the reader, or were suitable for the purposes of his story.

Now, though he had kept it in his box for nearly half of the period during which, according to the Horatian maxim, a work of art ought to lie ripening (a maxim, the truth of which may, by the way, be questioned altogether), Mr. Pen had not buried his novel for this time, in order that the work might improve, but because he did not know where else to bestow it, or had no particular desire to see it. A man who thinks of putting away a composition for ten years before he shall give it to the world, or exercise his own maturer judgment upon it, had best be very sure of the original strength and durability of the work; otherwise on withdrawing it from its crypt he may find, that like small wine it has lost what flavour it once had, and is only tasteless when opened. There

are works of all tastes and smacks, the small and the strong, those that improve by age, and those that won't bear keeping at all, but are pleasant at the first draught, when they refresh and sparkle.

Now Pen had never any notion, even in the time of his youthful inexperience and fervour of imagination, that the story he was writing was a masterpiece of composition, or that he was the equal of the great authors whom he admired; and when he now reviewed his little performance, he was keenly enough alive to its faults, and pretty modest regarding its merits. It was not very good, he thought; but it was as good as most books of the kind that had the run of circulating libraries and the career of the season. He had critically examined more than one fashionable novel by the authors of the day then popular, and he thought that his intellect was as good as theirs and that he could write the English language as well as those ladies or gentlemen; and as he now ran over his early performance, he was pleased to find here and there passages exhibiting both fancy and vigour, and traits, if not of genius, of genuine passion and feeling. This, too, was Warrington's verdict, when that severe critic, after half-an-hour's perusal of the manuscript, and the consumption of a couple of pipes of tobacco, laid Pen's book down, yawning portentously. "I can't read any more of that balderdash now," he said; "but it seems to me there is some good stuff in it, Pen, my boy. There's a certain greenness and freshness in it which I like somehow. The bloom disappears off the face of poetry after you begin to shave. You can't get up that naturalness and artless rosy tint in after days. Your cheeks are pale, and have got faded by exposure to evening parties, and you are obliged to take curling-irons, and macassar, and the deuce-knows-what to your whiskers; they curl ambrosially, and you are very grand and genteel,

and so forth; but, ah! Pen, the spring time was the best."

"What the deuce have my whiskers to do with the subject in hand?" Pen said (who, perhaps, may have been nettled by Warrington's allusion to those ornaments, which, to say the truth, the young man coaxed, and curled, and oiled, and perfumed, and petted, in rather an absurd manner). "Do you think we can do anything with 'Walter Lorraine?' Shall we take him to the publishers, or make an *auto-da-fe* of him?"

"I don't see what is the good of incremation," Warrington said, "though I have a great mind to put him into the fire, to punish your atrocious humbug and hypocrisy. Shall I burn him indeed? You have much too great a value for him to hurt a hair of his head."

"Have I? Here goes," said Pen, and "Walter Lorraine" went off the table, and was flung on to the coals. But the fire having done its duty of boiling the young man's breakfast-kettle, had given up work for the day, and had gone out, as Pen knew very well; and Warrington, with a scornful smile, once more took up the manuscript with the tongs from out of the harmless cinders.

"O, Pen, what a humbug you are!" Warrington said; "and, what is worst of all, Sir, a clumsy humbug. I saw you look to see that the fire was out before you sent 'Walter Lorraine' behind the bars. No, we won't burn him: we will carry him to the Egyptians, and sell him. We will exchange him away for money, yea, for silver and gold, and for beef and for liquors, and for tobacco and for raiment. This youth will fetch some price in the market; for he is a comely lad, though not over strong; but we will fatten him up, and give him the bath, and curl his hair, and we will sell him for a hundred piastres to Bacon or to Bungay. The rubbish is saleable

enough, Sir; and my advice to you is this: the next time you go home for a holiday, take 'Walter Lorraine' in your carpet-bag — give him a more modern air, prune away, though sparingly, some of the green passages, and add a little comedy, and cheerfulness, and satire, and that sort of thing, and then we'll take him to market, and sell him. The book is not a wonder of wonders, but it will do very well."

"Do you think so, Warrington?" said Pen, delighted, for this was great praise from his cynical friend.

"You silly young fool! I think it's uncommonly clever," Warrington said in a kind voice. "So do you, Sir." And with the manuscript which he held in his hand he playfully struck Pen on the cheek. That part of Pen's countenance turned as red as it had ever done in the earliest days of his blushes: he grasped the other's hand and said, "Thank you, Warrington," with all his might: and then he retired to his own room with his book, and passed the greater part of the day upon his bed re-reading it: and he did as Warrington had advised, and altered not a little, and added a great deal, until at length he had fashioned "Walter Lorraine" pretty much into the shape in which, as the respected novel-reader knows, it subsequently appeared.

Whilst he was at work upon this performance, the good-natured Warrington artfully inspired the two gentlemen who "read" for Messrs. Bacon and Bungay with the greatest curiosity regarding "Walter Lorraine," and pointed out the peculiar merits of its distinguished author. It was at the period when the novel, called "The Fashionable," was in vogue among us; and Warrington did not fail to point out, as before, how Pen was a man of the very first fashion himself, and received at the houses of some of the greatest personages in the land. The simple and kind-hearted Percy Popjoy was brought to bear upon Mrs. Bungay, whom he informed that

his friend Pendennis was occupied upon a work of the most exciting nature; a work that the whole town would run after, full of wit, genius, satire, pathos, and every conceivable good quality. We have said before, that Bungay knew no more about novels than he did about Hebrew or Algebra, and neither read nor understood any of the books which he published and paid for; but he took his opinions from his professional advisers and from Mrs. B., and, evidently with a view to a commercial transaction, asked Pendennis and Warrington to dinner again.

Bacon, when he found that Bungay was about to treat, of course, began to be anxious and curious, and desired to outbid his rival. Was any thing settled between Mr. Pendennis and the odious house "over the way" about the new book? Mr. Hack, the confidential reader, was told to make inquiries, and see if any thing was to be done, and the result of the inquiries of that diplomatist, was, that one morning, Bacon himself toiled up the stair-case of Lamb Court, and to the door on which the names of Mr. Warrington, and Mr. Pendennis, were painted.

For a gentleman of fashion as poor Pen was represented to be, it must be confessed, that the apartments he and his friend occupied, were not very suitable. The ragged carpet had grown only more ragged during the two years of joint occupancy: a constant odour of tobacco perfumed the sitting-room: Bacon tumbled over the laundress's buckets in the passage through which he had to pass; Warrington's shooting jacket was as tattered at the elbows as usual; and the chair which Bacon was requested to take on entering, broke down with the publisher. Warrington burst out laughing, said that Bacon had got the game chair, and bawled out to Pen to fetch a sound one from his bed-room. And seeing the publisher looking round the dingy room with an air of profound pity and

wonder, asked him whether he didn't think the apartments were elegant, and if he would like, for Mrs. Bacon's drawing-room, any of the articles of furniture? Mr. Warrington's character as a humourist, was known to Mr. Bacon: "I never can make that chap out," the publisher was heard to say, "or tell whether he is in earnest or only chaffing."

It is very possible that Mr. Bacon would have set the two gentlemen down as impostors altogether, but that there chanced to be on the breakfast-table certain cards of invitation which the post of the morning had brought in for Pen, and which happened to come from some very exalted personage of the *beau-monde*, into which our young man had his introduction. Looking down upon these, Bacon saw that the Marchioness of Steyne would be at home to Mr. Arthur Pendennis upon a given day, and that another lady of distinction proposed to have dancing at her house upon a certain future evening. Warrington saw the admiring publisher eyeing these documents. "Ah," said he, with an air of simplicity, "Pendennis is one of the most affable young men I ever knew, Mr. Bacon. Here is a young fellow that dines with all the great men in London, and yet he'll take his mutton-chop with you and me quite contentedly. There's nothing like the affability of the old English gentleman."

"O no, nothing," said Mr. Bacon.

"And you wonder why he should go on living up three pair of stairs with me, don't you, now? Well, it *is* a queer taste. But we are fond of each other; and as I can't afford to live in a grand house, he comes and stays in these rickety old chambers with me. He's a man that can afford to live any where."

"I fancy it don't cost him much *here*," thought Mr. Bacon; and the object of these praises presently entered the room from his adjacent sleeping apartment.

Then Mr. Bacon began to speak upon the subject of his visit; said he heard that Mr. Pendennis had a manuscript novel; professed himself anxious to have a sight of that work, and had no doubt that they could come to terms respecting it. What would be his price for it? would he give Bacon the refusal of it? he would find our house a liberal house, and so forth. The delighted Pen assumed an air of indifference, and said that he was already in treaty with Bungay, and could give no definite answer. This piqued the other into such liberal, though vague offers, that Pen began to fancy Eldorado was opening to him, and that his fortune was made from that day.

I shall not mention what was the sum of money which Mr. Arthur Pendennis finally received for the first edition of his novel of "Walter Lorraine;" lest other young literary aspirants should expect to be as lucky as he was, and unprofessional persons forsake their own callings, whatever they may be, for the sake of supplying the world with novels, whereof there is already a sufficiency. Let no young people be misled and rush fatally into romance-writing: for one book which succeeds let them remember the many that fail, I do not say deservedly or otherwise, and wholesomely abstain: or if they venture, at least let them do so at their own peril. As for those who have already written novels, this warning is not addressed, of course, to them. Let them take their wares to market; let them apply to Bacon and Bungay, and all the publishers in the Row, or the metropolis, and may they be happy in their ventures. This world is so wide, and the tastes of mankind happily so various, that there is always a chance for every man, and he may win the prize by his genius or by his good fortune. But what is the chance of success or failure; of obtaining popularity, or of holding it when achieved? One man goes over the ice, which bears him, and

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sellor than the old gentleman in the person of his friend, and in his own conscience, which said to him, "Be grateful for this piece of good fortune; don't plunge into any extravagancies. Pay back Laura!" And he wrote a letter to her, in which he told her his thanks and his regard; and inclosed to her such an instalment of his debt as nearly wiped it off. The widow and Laura herself might well be affected by the letter. It was written with genuine tenderness and modesty; and old Dr. Portman, when he read a passage in the letter, in which Pen, with an honest heart full of gratitude, humbly thanked Heaven for his present prosperity, and for sending him such dear and kind friends to support him in his ill-fortune, — when Doctor Portman read this portion of the letter, his voice faltered, and his eyes twinkled behind his spectacles. And when he had quite finished reading the same, and had taken his glasses off his nose, and had folded up the paper and given it back to the widow, I am constrained to say, that after holding Mrs. Pendennis's hand for a minute, the Doctor drew that lady towards him and fairly kissed her: at which salute, of course, Helen burst out crying on the Doctor's shoulder, for her heart was too full to give any other reply: and the Doctor, blushing a great deal after his feat, led the lady, with a bow, to the sofa, on which he seated himself by her; and he mumbled out, in a low voice, some words of a Great Poet whom he loved very much, and who describes how in the days of his prosperity he had made "the widow's heart to sing for joy."

"The letter does the boy very great honour, very great honour, my dear," he said, patting it as it lay on Helen's knee — "and I think we have all reason to be thankful for it — very thankful. I need not tell you in what quarter, my dear, for you are a sainted woman: yes, Laura, my love, your mother is a sainted woman. And Mrs. Pendennis, Ma'am,

I shall order a copy of the book for myself, and another at the Book Club."

We may be sure that the widow and Laura walked out to meet the mail which brought them their copy of Pen's precious novel, as soon as that work was printed and ready for delivery to the public: and that they read it to each other: and that they also read it privately and separately, for when the widow came out of her room in her dressing-gown at one o'clock in the morning with volume two, which she had finished, she found Laura devouring volume three in bed. Laura did not say much about the book, but Helen pronounced that it was a happy mixture of Shakspeare, and Byron, and Walter Scott, and was quite certain that her son was the greatest genius, as he was the best son, in the world.

Did Laura not think about the book and the author, although she said so little? At least she thought about Arthur Pendennis. Kind as his tone was, it vexed her. She did not like his eagerness to repay that money. She would rather that her brother had taken her gift as she intended it: and was pained that there should be money calculations between them. His letters from London, written with the good-natured wish to amuse his mother, were full of descriptions of the famous people and the entertainments, and magnificence of the great city. Everybody was flattering him and spoiling him, she was sure. Was he not looking to some great marriage, with that cunning uncle for a Mentor (between whom and Laura there was always an antipathy), that inveterate worldling, whose whole thoughts were bent upon pleasure and rank and fortune? He never alluded to — to old times, when he spoke of her. He had forgotten them and her, perhaps: had he not forgotten other things and people?

These thoughts may have passed in Miss Laura's mind, though she did not, she could not, confide them to Helen.

She had one more secret, too, from that lady, which she could not divulge, perhaps, because she knew how the widow would have rejoiced to know it. This regarded an event which had occurred during that visit to Lady Rockminster, which Laura had paid in the last Christmas holidays: when Pen was at home with his mother, and when Mr. Pynsent, supposed to be so cold and so ambitious, had formally offered his hand to Miss Bell. No one except herself and her admirer knew of this proposal: or that Pynsent had been rejected by her, and probably the reasons she gave to the mortified young man himself, were not those which actuated her refusal, or those which she chose to acknowledge to herself. "I never," she told Pynsent, "can accept such an offer as that which you make me, which your own is unknown to your family as I am sure it would be unwelcome to them. The difference of rank between us is too great. You are very kind to me here — too good and kind, dear Mr. Pynsent — but I am little better than a dependant."

"A dependant! who ever so thought of you? You are the equal of all the world," Pynsent broke out.

"I am a dependant at home, too," Laura said, sweetly, "and indeed I would not be otherwise. Left early a poor orphan, I have found the kindest and tenderest of mothers, and I have vowed never to leave her — never. Pray do not speak of this again — here, under your relative's roof, or elsewhere. It is impossible."

"If Lady Rockminster asks you herself, will you listen to her?" Pynsent cried, eagerly.

"No," Laura said. "I beg you never to speak of this any more. I must go away if you do" — and with this she left him.

Pynsent never asked for Lady Rockminster's intercession: he knew how vain it was to look for that: and he never spoke again on that subject to Laura or to any person.

When at length the famous novel appeared, it not only met with applause from more impartial critics than Mrs. Pendennis but, luckily for Pen, it suited the taste of the public, and obtained a quick and considerable popularity. Before two months were over, Pen had the satisfaction and surprise of seeing the second edition of "Walter Lorraine" advertised in the newspapers; and enjoyed the pleasure of reading and sending home the critiques of various literary journals and reviewers upon his book. Their censure did not much affect him; for the good-natured young man was disposed to accept with considerable humility the dispraise of others. Nor did their praise elate him over much; for, like most honest persons, he had his own opinion about his own performance, and when a critic praised him in the wrong place, he was hurt rather than pleased by the compliment. But if a review of his work was very laudatory, it was a great pleasure to him to send it home to his mother at Fair Oaks, and to think of the joy which it would give there. There are some natures, and perhaps, as we have said, Pendennis's was one, which are improved and softened by prosperity and kindness, as there are men of other dispositions, who become arrogant and graceless under good fortune. Happy he who can endure one or the other with modesty and good-humour! Lucky he who has been educated to bear his fate, whatsoever it may be, by an early example of uprightness, and a childish training in honour!

CHAPTER XXI.

Alsatia.

BRED up, like a bailiff or a shabby attorney, about the purlieus of the Inns of Court, Shepherd's Inn is always to be found in the close neighbourhood of Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and the Temple. Somewhere behind the black gables and smutty chimney-stacks of Wych Street, Holywell Street, Chancery Lane, the quadrangle lies, hidden from the outer world; and it is approached by curious passages and ambiguous smoky alleys, on which the sun has forgotten to shine. Slop-sellers, brandy-ball and hard-bake vendors, purveyors of theatrical prints for youth, dealers in dingy furniture, and bedding suggestive of anything but sleep, line the narrow walls and dark casements with their wares. The doors are many-belled: and crowds of dirty children form endless groups about the steps: or around the shell-fish dealers' trays in these courts; whereof the damp pavements resound with pattens, and are drabbed with a never-failing mud. Ballad-singers come and chant here, in deadly guttural tones, satirical songs against the Whig administration, against the bishops and dignified clergy, against the German relatives of an august royal family: Punch sets up his theatre, sure of an audience, and occasionally of a halfpenny from the swarming occupants of the houses: women scream after their children for loitering in the gutter, or, worse still, against the husband who comes reeling from the gin-shop; — there is a ceaseless din and life in these courts, out of which you pass into the tranquil, old-fashioned quadrangle of Shepherd's Inn. In a mangy little grass-platt in the centre rises up the statue of Shepherd, defended by iron-railings from the assaults of boys. The hall of the Inn, on which the founder's arms

are painted, occupies one side of the square, the tall and ancient chambers are carried round other two sides, and over the central archway, which leads into Oldcastle Street, and so into the great London thoroughfare.

The Inn may have been occupied by lawyers once: but the laity have long since been admitted into its precincts, and I do not know that any of the principal legal firms have their chambers here. The offices of the Polwheedle and Tredyddlum Copper Mines occupy one set of the ground-floor chambers; the Registry of Patent Inventions and Union of Genius and Capital Company, another; — the only gentleman whose name figures here, and in the "Law List," is Mr. Campion, who wears mustachios, and who comes in his cab twice or thrice in a week; and whose West End offices are in Curzon Street, Mayfair, where Mrs. Campion entertains the nobility and gentry to whom her husband lends money. There, and on his glazed cards, he is Mr. Somerset Campion; here he is Campion & Co.; and the same tuft which ornaments his chin, sprouts from the under lip of the rest of the firm. It is splendid to see his cab horse harness blazing with heraldic bearings, as the vehicle stops at the door leading to his chambers. The horse flings froth off his nostrils as he chafes and tosses under the shining bit. The reins and the breeches of the groom are glittering white, — the lustre of that equipage makes a sunshine in that shady place.

Our old friend, Captain Costigan, has examined Campion's cab and horse many an afternoon, as he trailed about the court in his carpet slippers and dressing-gown, with his old hat cocked over his eye. He suns himself there after his breakfast when the day is suitable; and goes and pays a visit to the porter's lodge, where he pats the heads of the children, and talks to Mrs. Bolton about the thayatres and me daughter Leedy Mirabel. Mrs. Bolton was herself in the profession

once, and danced at the Wells in early days as the thirteenth of Mr. Serle's forty pupils.

Costigan lives in the third floor at No. 4, in the rooms which were Mr. Podmore's, and whose name is still on the door — (somebody else's name, by the way, is on almost all the doors in Shepherd's Inn). When Charley Podmore, (the pleasing tenor singer, T.R.D.L., and at the Back-Kitchen Concert Rooms,) married, and went to live at Lambeth, he ceded his chambers to Mr. Bows and Captain Costigan, who occupy them in common now, and you may often hear the tones of Mr. Bows's piano of fine days when the windows are open, and when he is practising for amusement, or for the instruction of a theatrical pupil, of whom he has one or two. Fanny Bolton is one, the portress's daughter, who has heard tell of her mother's theatrical glories, which she longs to emulate. She has a good voice and a pretty face and figure for the stage; and she prepares the rooms and makes the beds and breakfasts for Messrs. Costigan and Bows, in return for which, the latter instructs her in music and singing. But for his unfortunate propensity to liquor (and in that excess she supposes that all men of fashion indulge), she thinks the captain the finest gentleman in the world, and believes in all the versions of all his stories; and she is very fond of Mr. Bows too, and very grateful to him, and this shy queer old gentleman has a fatherly fondness for her too, for in truth his heart is full of kindness, and he is never easy unless he loves somebody.

Costigan has had the carriages of visitors of distinction before his humble door in Shepherd's Inn: and to hear him talk of a morning (for his evening song is of a much more melancholy nature) you would fancy that Sir Charles and Lady Mirabel were in the constant habit calling at his chambers, and bringing with them the select nobility to visit the "old

man, the honest old half-pay Captain, poor old Jack Costigan," as Cos calls himself.

The truth is, that Lady Mirabel has left her husband's card (which has been stuck in the little looking-glass over the mantel-piece of the sitting-room at No. 4, for these many months past), and has come in person to see her father, but not of late days. A kind person, disposed to discharge her duties gravely, upon her marriage with Sir Charles, she settled a little pension upon her father, who occasionally was admitted to the table of his daughter and son-in-law. At first poor Cos's behaviour "in the height of *poloît societee*," as he denominated Lady Mirabel's drawing-room table, was harmless, if it was absurd. As he clothed his person in his best attire, so he selected the longest and richest words in his vocabulary to deck his conversation, and adopted a solemnity of demeanour which struck with astonishment all those persons in whose company he happened to be. — "Was your Leedyship in the Pork to dee?" he would demand of his daughter. "I looked for your equipage in veen: — the poor old man was not gratified by the soight of his daughther's choriot. Sir Chorlus, I saw your neem at the Levée; many's the Levee at the Castle at Dublin that poor old Jack Costigan has attended in his time. Did the Juke look pretty well? Bedad, I'll call at Apsley House and lave me cyard upon 'um. I thank ye, James, a little dthrop more champeane." Indeed, he was magnificent in his courtesy to all, and addressed his observations not only to the master and the guests, but to the domestics who waited at the table, and who had some difficulty in maintaining their professional gravity while they waited on Captain Costigan.

On the first two or three visits to his son-in-law, Costigan maintained a strict sobriety, content to make up for his lost time when he got to the Back-Kitchen, where he bragged

about his son-in-law's clart and burgundee, until his own utterance began to fail him, over his sixth tumbler of whiskey-punch. But with familiarity his caution vanished, and poor Cos lamentably disgraced himself at Sir Charles Mirabel's table, by premature inebriation. A carriage was called for him: the hospitable door was shut upon him. Often and sadly did he speak to his friends at the Kitchen of his resemblance to King Lear in the plee — of his having a thankless choild, bedad — of his being a pore worn-out lonely old man, dthriven to dthinking by ingratitude, and seeking to dthrown his sorrows in punch.

It is painful to be obliged to record the weaknesses of fathers, but it must be furthermore told of Costigan, that when his credit was exhausted and his money gone, he would not unfrequently beg money from his daughter, and make statements to her not altogether consistent with strict truth. On one day a bailiff was about to lead him to prison, he wrote, "unless the — to you insignificant — sum of three pound five can be forthcoming to liberate a poor man's grey hairs from gaol." And the good-natured Lady Mirabel dispatched the money necessary for her father's liberation, with a caution to him to be more economical for the future. On a second occasion the Captain met with a frightful accident, and broke a plate-glass window in the Strand, for which the proprietor of the shop held him liable. The money was forthcoming on this time too, to repair her papa's disaster, and was carried down by Lady Mirabel's servant to the slip-shod messenger and aid-de-camp of the Captain, who brought the letter announcing his mishap. If the servant had followed the Captain's aid-de-camp who carried the remittance, he would have seen that gentleman, a person of Costigan's country too (for have we not said, that however poor an Irish gentleman is, he always has a poorer Irish gentleman to run on his errands

and transact his pecuniary affairs?) call a cab from the nearest stand, and rattle down to the Roscius's Head, Harlequin Yard, Drury Lane, where the Captain was indeed in pawn, and for several glasses containing rum and water, or other spirituous refreshment, of which he and his staff had partaken. On a third melancholy occasion he wrote that he was attacked by illness, and wanted money to pay the physician whom he was compelled to call in; and this time Lady Mirabel, alarmed about her father's safety, and perhaps reproaching herself that she had of late lost sight of her father, called for her carriage and drove to Shepherd's Inn, at the gate of which she alighted, whence she found the way to her father's chambers, "No. 4, third floor, name of Podmore over the door," the porterness said, with many curtsies, pointing towards the door of the house into which the affectionate daughter entered and mounted the dingy stair. Alas! the door, surmounted by the name of Podmore, was opened to her by poor Cos in his shirt-sleeves, and prepared with the gridiron to receive the mutton-chops, which Mrs. Bolton had gone to purchase.

Also, it was not pleasant for Sir Charles Mirabel to have letters constantly addressed to him at Brookes's, with the information that Captain Costigan was in the hall, waiting for an answer; or when he went to play his rubber at the Travelers', to be obliged to shoot out of his brougham and run up the steps rapidly, lest his father-in-law should seize upon him; and to think that while he read his paper or played his whist, the Captain was walking on the opposite side of Pall Mall, with that dreadful cocked hat, and the eye beneath it fixed steadily upon the windows of the club. Sir Charles was a weak man; he was old, and had many infirmities: he cried about his father-in-law to his wife, whom he adored with senile infatuation: he said he must go abroad. — he must go and live

in the country, — he should die, or have another fit if he saw that man again — he knew he should. And it was only by paying a second visit to Captain Costigan, and representing to him, that if he plagued Sir Charles by letters, or addressed him in the street, or made any further applications for loans, his allowance would be withdrawn altogether; that Lady Mirabel was enabled to keep her papa in order, and to restore tranquillity to her husband. And on occasion of this visit, she sternly rebuked Bows for not keeping a better watch over the Captain; desired that he should not be allowed to drink in that shameful way; and that the people at the horrid taverns which he frequented should be told, upon no account to give him credit. "Papa's conduct is bringing me to the grave," she said (though she looked perfectly healthy), and you, as an old man, Mr. Bows, and one that pretended to have a regard for us, ought to be ashamed of abetting him in it." These were the thanks which honest Bows got for his friendship and his life's devotion. And I do not suppose that the old philosopher was much worse off than many other men, or had greater reason to grumble.

On the second floor of the next house to Bows's, in Shepherd's Inn, at No. 3, live two other acquaintances of ours. Colonel Altamont, agent to the Nawaab of Lucknow, and Captain the Chevalier Edward Strong. No name at all is over their door. The Captain does not choose to let all the world know where he lives, and his cards bear the address of a Jermyn Street hotel; and as for the Ambassador Plenipotentiary of the Indian potentate, he is not an envoy accredited to the Courts of St. James's or Leadenhall Street, but is here on a confidential mission, quite independent of the East India Company or the Board of Control. "In fact," as Strong says, "Colonel Altamont's object being financial, and

to effectuate a sale of some of the principal diamonds and rubies of the Lucknow crown, his wish is *not* to report himself at the India House or in Cannon Row, but rather to negotiate with private capitalists — with whom he has had important transactions both in this country and on the Continent.”

We have said that these anonymous chambers of Strong's had been very comfortably furnished since the arrival of Sir Francis Clavering in London, and the Chevalier might boast with reason to the friends who visited him, that few retired Captains were more snugly quartered than he, in his crib in Shepherd's Inn. There were three rooms below: the office where Strong transacted his business — whatever that might be — and where still remained the desk and railings of the departed officials who had preceded him, and the Chevalier's own bed-room and sitting-room; and a private stair led out of the office to two upper apartments, the one occupied by Colonel Altamont, and the other serving as the kitchen of the establishment, and the bed-room of Mr. Grady, the attendant. These rooms were on a level with the apartments of our friends Bows and Costigan next door at No. 4; and by reaching over the communicating leads, Grady could command the mignonette-box which bloomed in Bows's window.

From Grady's kitchen casement often came odours still more fragrant. The three old soldiers who formed the garrison of No. 4, were all skilled in the culinary art. Grady was great at an Irish stew; the Colonel was famous for pillaus and curries; and as for Strong, he could cook anything. He made French dishes and Spanish dishes, stews, fricassees, and omelettes, to perfection; nor was there any man in England more hospitable than he when his purse was full, or his credit was good. At those happy periods, he could give a friend, as he said, a good dinner, a good glass of wine, and a good song afterwards; and poor Cos often heard with envy

the roar of Strong's choruses, and the musical clinking of the glasses, as he sat in his own room, so far removed and yet so near to those festivities. It was not expedient to invite Mr. Costigan always: his practice of inebriation was lamentable; and he bored Strong's guests with his stories when sober, and with his maudlin tears when drunk.

A strange and motley set they were, these friends of the Chevalier; and though Major Pendennis would not much have relished their company, Arthur and Warrington liked it not a little, and Pen thought it as amusing as the society of the finest gentlemen in the finest houses which he had the honour to frequent. There was a history about every man of the set: they seemed all to have had their tides of luck and bad fortune. Most of them had wonderful schemes and speculations in their pockets, and plenty for making rapid and extraordinary fortunes. Jack Holt had been in Don Carlos's army, when Ned Strong had fought on the other side; and was now organising a little scheme for smuggling tobacco into London, which must bring thirty thousand a year to any man who would advance fifteen hundred, just to bribe the last officer of the Excise who held out, and had wind of the scheme. Tom Diver, who had been in the Mexican navy, knew of a specie-ship which had been sunk in the first year of the war, with three hundred and eighty thousand dollars on board, and a hundred and eighty thousand pounds in bars and doubloons. "Give me eighteen hundred pounds," Tom said, "and I'm off to-morrow. I take out four men, and a diving-bell with me; and I return in ten months to take my seat in Parliament, by Jove! and to buy back my family estate." Keightley, the manager of the Tredyddlum and Polwheedle Copper Mines (which were as yet under water), besides singing as good a second as any professional man, and besides the Tredyddlum Office, had a Smyrna Sponge Com-

pany, and a little quicksilver operation in view, which would set him straight with the world yet. Filby had been everything: a corporal of dragoons, a field-preacher, and missionary-agent for converting the Irish; an actor at a Greenwich fair-booth, in front of which his father's attorney found him when the old gentleman died and left him that famous property, from which he got no rents now, and of which nobody exactly knew the situation. Added to these was Sir Francis Clavering, Bart., who liked their society, though he did not much add to its amusements by his convivial powers. But he was made much of by the company now, on account of his wealth and position in the world. He told his little story and sang his little song or two with great affability; and he had had his own history, too, before his accession to good fortune; and had seen the inside of more prisons than one, and written his name on many a stamped paper.

When Altamont first returned from Paris, and after he had communicated with Sir Francis Clavering from the hotel at which he had taken up his quarters (and which he had reached in a very denuded state, considering the wealth of diamonds and rubies with which this honest man was entrusted), Strong was sent to him by his patron the Baronet; paid his little bill at the inn, and invited him to come and sleep for a night or two at the chambers, where he subsequently took up his residence. To negotiate with this man was very well, but to have such a person settled in his rooms, and to be constantly burthened with such society, did not suit the Chevalier's taste much; and he grumbled not a little to his principal.

"I wish you would put this bear into somebody else's cage," he said to Clavering. "The fellow's no gentleman. I don't like walking with him. He dresses himself like a nigger on a holiday. I took him to the play the other night; and,

by Dove, Sir, he abused the actor who was doing the part of villain in the play, and swore at him so, that the people in the boxes wanted to turn him out. The after-piece was the 'Brigand,' where Wallack comes in wounded, you know, and dies. When he died, Altamont began to cry like a child, and said it was a d — d shame, and cried and swore so, that there was another row, and everybody laughing. Then I had to take him away, because he wanted to take his coat off to one fellow who laughed at him; and bellowed to him to stand up like a man. — Who is he? Where the deuce does he come from? You had best tell me the whole story. Frank, you must one day. You and he have robbed a church together, that's my belief. You had better get it off your mind at once, Clavering, and tell me what this Altamont is, and what hold he has over you."

"Hang him! I wish he was dead!" was the Baronet's only reply; and his countenance became so gloomy, that Strong did not think fit to question his patron any further at that time; but resolved, if need were, to try and discover for himself what was the secret tie between Altamont and Clavering.

CHAPTER XXII.

In which the Colonel narrates some of his adventures.

EARLY in the forenoon of the day after the dinner in Grosvenor Place, at which Colonel Altamont had chosen to appear, the Colonel emerged from his chamber in the upper story at Shepherd's Inn, and entered into Strong's sitting-room, where the Chevalier sate in his easy chair with the newspaper and his cigar. He was a man who made his tent comfortable wherever he pitched it, and long before Alta-

mont's arrival, had done justice to a copious breakfast of fried eggs and broiled rashers, which Mr. Grady had prepared *secundum artem*. Good-humoured and talkative, he preferred any company rather than none; and though he had not the least liking for his fellow-lodger, and would not have grieved to hear that the accident had befallen him which Sir Francis Clavering desired so fervently, yet kept on fair terms with him. He had seen Altamont to bed with great friendliness on the night previous, and taken away his candle for fear of accidents; and finding a spirit-bottle empty, upon which he had counted for his nocturnal refreshment, had drunk a glass of water with perfect contentment over his pipe, before he turned into his own crib and to sleep. That enjoyment never failed him: he had always an easy temper, a faultless digestion, and a rosy cheek; and whether he was going into action the next morning or to prison (and both had been his lot), in the camp or the Fleet, the worthy Captain snored healthfully through the night, and woke with a good heart and appetite, for the struggles or difficulties or pleasures of the day.

The first act of Colonel Altamont was to bellow to Grady for a pint of pale ale, the which he first poured into a pewter flagon, whence he transferred it to his own lips. He put down the tankard empty, drew a great breath, wiped his mouth in his dressing-gown (the difference of the colour of his beard from his dyed whiskers had long struck Captain Strong, who had seen too that his hair was fair under his black wig, but made no remarks upon these circumstances) — the Colonel drew a great breath, and professed himself immensely refreshed by his draught. "Nothing like that beer," he remarked, "when the coppers are hot. Many a day I've drunk a dozen of Bass at Calcutta, and — and —"

"And at Lucknow, I suppose," Strong said with a laugh.

"I got the beer for you on purpose: knew you'd want it after last night." And the Colonel began to talk about his adventures of the preceding evening.

"I cannot help myself," the Colonel said, beating his head with his big hand. "I'm a madman when I get the liquor on board me; and ain't fit to be trusted with a spirit-bottle. When I once begin I can't stop till I've emptied it; and when I've swallowed it, Lord knows what I say or what I don't say. I dined at home here quite quiet. Grady gave me just my two tumblers, and I intended to pass the evening at the Black and Red as sober as a parson. Why did you leave that confounded sample-bottle of Hollands out of the cupboard, Strong? Grady must go out too, and leave me the kettle a-boiling for tea. It was of no use, I couldn't keep away from it. Washed it all down, Sir, by Jingo. And it's my belief I had some more, too, afterwards at that infernal little thieves' den."

"What, were you there too?" Strong asked, "and before you came to Grosvenor Place? That was beginning betimes."

"Early hours to be drunk and cleared out before nine o'clock, eh? But so it was. Yes, like a great big fool, I must go there; and found the fellows dining, Blackland and young Moss, and two or three more of the thieves. If we'd gone to Rouge et Noir, I must have won. But we didn't try the black and red. No, hang 'em, they know'd I'd have beat 'em at that — I must have beat 'em — I can't help beating 'em, I tell you. But they was too cunning for me. That rascal Blackland got the bones out, and we played hazard on the dining-table. And I dropped all the money I had from you in the morning, be hanged to my luck. It was that that set me wild, and I suppose I must have been very hot about the head, for I went off thinking to get some more money

from Clavering, I recollect; and then — and then I don't much remember what happened till I woke this morning, and heard old Bows at No. 3 playing on his pianner."

Strong mused for a while as he lighted his cigar with a coal. "I should like to know how you always draw money from Clavering, Colonel," he said.

The Colonel burst out with a laugh — "Ha, ha! he owes it me," he said.

"I don't know that that's a reason with Frank for paying," Strong answered. "He owes plenty besides you."

"Well, he gives it me because he is so fond of me," the other said with the same grinning sneer. "He loves me like a brother; you know he does, Captain. — No? — He don't? Well, perhaps he don't; and if you ask me no questions, perhaps I'll tell you no lies, Captain Strong — put that in your pipe and smoke it, my boy."

"But I'll give up that confounded brandy-bottle," the Colonel continued, after a pause. "I must give it up, or it'll be the ruin of me."

"It makes you say queer things," said the Captain, looking Altamont hard in the face. "Remember what you said last night, at Clavering's table."

"Say? What *did* I say?" asked the other hastily. "Did I split anything? Dammy, Strong, did I split anything?"

"Ask me no questions, and I will tell you no lies," the Chevalier replied on his part. Strong thought of the words Mr. Altamont had used, and his abrupt departure from the Baronet's dining-table and house as soon as he recognised Major Pendennis, or Captain Beak, as he called the Major. But Strong resolved to seek an explanation of these words otherwise than from Colonel Altamont, and did not choose to recall them to the other's memory. "No," he said then, "you didn't split as you call it, Colonel; it was only a trap of

mise to see if I could make you speak ; but you didn't say a word that anybody could comprehend—you were too far gone for that."

So much the better, Altamont thought; and heaved a great sigh, as if relieved. Strong remarked the emotion, but took no notice, and the other being in a communicative mood, went on speaking.

"Yes, I own to my faults," continued the Colonel, "There is some things I can't, do what I will, resist: a bottle of brandy, a box of dice, and a beautiful woman. No man of pluck and spirit, no man as was worth his salt ever could, as I know of. There's hardly p'raps a country in the world in which them three ain't got me into trouble."

"Indeed?" said Strong.

"Yes, from the age of fifteen, when I ran away from home, and went cabin-boy on board an Indiaman, till now, when I'm fifty year old, pretty nigh, them women have always been my ruin. Why, it was one of 'em, and with such black eyes and jewels on her neck, and sattens and ermine like a duchess, I tell you — it was one of 'em at Paris that swept off the best part of the thousand pound as I went off. Didn't I ever tell you of it? Well, I don't mind. At first I was very cautious, and having such a lot of money kep it close and lived like a gentleman — Colonel Altamont, Meurice's hotel, and that sort of thing — never played, except at the public tables, and won more than I lost. Well, Sir, there was a chap that I saw at the hotel and the Palace Royal too, a regular swell fellow, with white kid gloves and a tuft to his chin, Bloundell-Bloundell his name was, as I made acquaintance with somehow, and he asked me to dinner, and took me to Madame the Countess de Foljambe's soirées — such a woman, Strong! — such an eye! such a hand at the pianner. Lor bless you, she'd sit down and sing to you, and gaze at you, until she

warbled your soul out of your body a'most. She asked me to go to her evening parties every Toosday; and didn't I take opera-boxes and give her dinners at the restaurateur's, that's all? But I had a run of luck at the tables, and it was not in the dinners and opera-boxes that poor Clavering's money went. No, be hanged to it, it was swep off in another way. One night, at the Countess's, there was several of us at supper — Mr. Bloundell-Bloundell, the Honourable Deuceace, the Marky de la Tour de Force — all tip-top nobs, Sir, and the height of fashion, when we had supper, and champagne you may be sure in plenty, and then some of that confounded brandy. I would have it — I would go on at it — the Countess mixed the tumblers of punch for me, and we had cards as well as grog after supper, and I played and drank until I don't know what I did. I was like I was last night. I was taken away and put to bed somehow, and never woke until the next day, to a roaring headache, and to see my servant, who said the Honourable Deuceace wanted to see me, and was waiting in the sitting-room. 'How are you, Colonel?' says he, a coming into my bed-room. 'How long did you stay last night after I went away? The play was getting too high for me, and I'd lost enough to you for one night.'

"'To me, says I, how 's that, my dear feller? (for though he was an Earl's son, we was as familiar as you and me). How 's that, my dear feller,' says I, and he tells me, that he had borrowed thirty louis of me at vingt-et-un, that he have me an I. O. U. for it the night before, which I put into my pocket-book before he left the room. I takes out my card-case — it was the Countess as worked it for me — and there was the I. O. U. sure enough, and he paid me thirty louis in gold down upon the table at my bed-side. So I said he was a gentleman, and asked him if he would like to take anything, when my servant should get it for him; but the Honourable

Deuceace don't drink of a morning, and he went away to some business which he said he had.

"Presently there's another ring at my outer door; and this time it's Bloundell-Bloundell and the Marky that comes in. 'Bong jour, Marky,' says I. 'Good morning — no headache,' says he. So I said I had one; and how I must have been uncommon queer the night afore; but they both declared I didn't show no signs of having had too much, but took my liquor as grave as a judge.

"'So,' says the Marky, 'Deuceace has been with you; we met him in the Palais Royal as we were coming from breakfast. Has he settled with you? Get it while you can: he's a slippery card; and as he won three ponies of Bloundell, I recommend you to get your money while he has some.'

"'He has paid me,' says I; 'but I knew no more than the dead that he owed me anything, and don't remember a bit about lending him thirty louis.'

"The Marky and Bloundell looks and smiles at each other at this; and Bloundell, says, 'Colonel, you are a queer feller. No man could have supposed, from your manners, that you had tasted anything stronger than tea all night, and yet you forget things in the morning. Come, come, — tell that to the marines, my friend, — we won't have it at any price.'

"'*En effet*,' says the Marky, twiddling his little black mustachios in the chimney-glass, and making a lunge or two as he used to do at the fencing-school. (He was a wonder at the fencing-school, and I've seen him knock down the image fourteen times running, at Lepage's.) 'Let us speak of affairs. Colonel, you understand that affairs of honour are best settled at once: perhaps it won't be inconvenient to you to arrange our little matters of last night.'

"'What little matters?' says I. 'Do you owe me any money, Marky?'

“‘Bah!’ says he; “do not let us have any more jesting. I have your note of hand for three hundred and forty louis. *La voici!*” says he, taking out a paper from his pocket-book.

“‘And mine for two hundred and ten,’ says Bloundell-Bloundell, and he pulls out *his* bit of paper.

“I was in such a rage of wonder at this, that I sprang out of bed, and wrapped my dressing-gown round me. ‘Are you come here to make a fool of me?’ says I. ‘I don’t owe you two hundred, or two thousand, or two louis; and I won’t pay you a farthing. Do you suppose you can catch me with your notes of hand? I laugh at ’em and at you; and I believe you to be a couple —’

“‘A couple of what?’ says Mr. Bloundell. ‘You, of course, are aware that we are a couple of men of honour, Colonel Altamont, and not come here to trifle or to listen to abuse from you. You will either pay us or we will expose you as a cheat, and chastise you as a cheat, too,’ says Bloundell.

“‘*Oui, parbleu,*’ says the Marky, — but I didn’t mind him, for I could have thrown the little fellow out of the window; but it was different with Bloundell, — he was a large man, that weighs three stone more than me, and stands six inches higher, and I think he could have done for me.

“‘Monsieur will pay, or Monsieur will give me the reason why. I believe you ’re little better than a *polisson*, Colonel Altamont,’ — that was the phrase he used” — Altamont said with a grin — “and I got plenty more of this language from the two fellows, and was in the thick of the row with them, when another of our party came in. This was a friend of mine — a gent I had met at Boulogne, and had taken to the Countess’s myself. And as he hadn’t played at all on the previous night, and had actually warned me against Bloundell and the others, I told the story to him, and so did the other two.

“‘I am very sorry,’ says he. ‘You would go on playing:

the Countess entreated you to discontinue. These gentlemen offered repeatedly to stop. It was you that insisted on the large stakes, not they.' In fact he charged dead against me: and when the two others went away, he told me how the Marky would shoot me as sure as my name was — was what it is. 'I left the Countess crying, too,' said he. 'She hates these two men; she has warned you repeatedly against them,' (which she actually had done, and often told me never to play with them) 'and now, Colonel, I have left her in hysterics almost, lest there should be any quarrel between you, and that confounded Marky should put a bullet through your head. It's my belief,' says my friend, 'that that woman is distractedly in love with you.'

"Do you think so?" says I; upon which my friend told me how she had actually gone down on her knees to him and said, 'Save Colonel Altamont!'

"As soon as I was dressed, I went and called upon that lovely woman. She gave a shriek and pretty near fainted when she saw me. She called me Ferdinand, — I'm blest if she didn't."

"I thought your name was Jack," said Strong, with a laugh; at which the Colonel blushed very much behind his dyed whiskers.

"A man may have more names than one, mayn't he, Strong?" Altamont asked. "When I'm with a lady, I like to take a good one. She called me by my Christian name. She cried fit to break your heart. I can't stand seeing a woman cry — never could — not whilst I'm fond of her. She said she could not bear to think of my losing so much money in her house. Wouldn't I take her diamonds and necklaces, and pay part?"

"I swore I wouldn't touch a farthing's worth of her jewellery, which perhaps I did not think was worth a great deal,

— but what can a woman do more than give you her, all? That's the sort I like, and I know there's plenty of 'em. And I told her to be easy about the money, for I would not pay one single farthing.

"Then they 'll shoot you,' says she; 'they 'll kill my Ferdinand.'

"They 'll kill my Jack wouldn't have sounded well in French," Strong said, laughing.

"Never mind about names," said the other, sulkily; "a man of honour may take any name he chooses, I suppose."

"Well, go on with your story," said Strong. "She said they would kill you."

"No," says I, 'they won't: for I will not let that scamp of a Marquis send me out of the world; and if he lays a hand on me, I 'll brain him, Marquis as he is.'

"At this the Countess shrank back from me as if I had said something very shocking. 'Do I understand Colonel Altamont aright?' says she: 'and that a British officer refuses to meet any person who provokes him to the field of honour?'

"Field of honour be hanged, Countess," says I. 'You would not have me be a target for that little scoundrel's pistol practice.'

"Colonel Altamont," says the Countess, 'I thought you were a man of honour — I thought, I — but no matter. Good bye, Sir.' — And she was sweeping out of the room her voice regular choking in her pocket-handkerchief.

"Countess!" says I, rushing after her and seizing her hand.

"Leave me, Monsieur le Colonel," says she, shaking me off, 'my father was a General of the Grand Army. A soldier should know how to pay *all* his debts of honour.'

"What could I do? Everybody was against me. Caroline said I had lost the money: though I didn't remember a syllable about the business. I had taken Deuceace's money too; but

then it was because he offered it to me you know, and that's a different thing. Every one of these chaps was a man of fashion and honour; and the Marky and the Countess of the first families in France. And by Jove, Sir, rather than offend her, I paid the money up: five hundred and sixty gold Napoleons, by Jove: besides three hundred which I lost when I had my revenge.

"And I can't tell you at this minute whether I was done or not," concluded the Colonel, musing. "Sometimes I think I was: but then Caroline was so fond of me. That woman would never have seen me done: never, I'm sure she wouldn't: at least, if she would, I'm deceived in woman."

Any further revelations of his past life which Altamont might have been disposed to confide to his honest comrade the Chevalier, were interrupted by a knocking at the outer door of their chambers; which, when opened by Grady the servant, admitted no less a person than Sir Francis Clavering into the presence of the two worthies.

"The Governor, by Jove," cried Strong, regarding the arrival of his patron with surprise. "What's brought you here?" growled Altamont, looking sternly from under his heavy eyebrows at the Baronet. "It's no good, I warrant." And indeed, good very seldom brought Sir Francis Clavering into that or any other place.

Whenever he came into Shepherd's Inn, it was money that brought the unlucky Baronet into those precincts; and there was commonly a gentleman of the money-dealing world in waiting for him at Strong's chambers, or at Campion's below; and a question of bills to negotiate or to renew. Clavering was a man who had never looked his debts fairly in the face, familiar as he had been with them all his life; as long as he could renew a bill, his mind was easy regarding it; and he would sign almost anything for to-morrow, provided to-day

could be left unmolested. He was a man whom scarcely any amount of fortune could have benefited permanently, and who was made to be ruined, to cheat small tradesmen, to be the victim of astuter sharpers: to be niggardly and reckless, and as destitute of honesty as the people who cheated him, and a dupe, chiefly because he was too mean to be a successful knave. He had told more lies in his time, and undergone more baseness of stratagem in order to stave off a small debt, or to swindle a poor creditor, than would have suffered to make a fortune for a braver rogue. He was abject and a shuffler in the very height of his prosperity. Had he been a Crown Prince — he could not have been more weak, useless, dissolute or ungrateful. He could not move through life except leaning on the arm of somebody: and yet he never had an agent but he mistrusted him; and marred any plans which might be arranged for his benefit, by secretly acting against the people whom he employed. Strong knew Clavering, and judged him quite correctly. It was not as friends that this pair met: but the Chevalier worked for his principal, as he would when in the army have pursued a harassing march, or undergone his part in the danger and privations of a siege; because it was his duty, and because he had agreed to it. "What is it he wants," thought the two officers of the Shepherd's Inn garrison, when the Baronet came among them.

His pale face expressed extreme anger and irritation. "So, Sir," he said, addressing Altamont, "you 've been at your old tricks."

"Which of 'um?" asked Altamont, with a sneer.

"You have been at the Rouge et Noir: you were there last night," cried the Baronet.

"How do you know, — were you there?" the other said. "I was at the Club: but it wasn't on the colours I played, — ask the Captain, — I 've been telling him of it. It was with

the bones. It was at hazard, Sir Francis, upon my word and honour it was;" and he looked at the Baronet with a knowing humorous mock humility, which only seemed to make the other more angry.

"What the deuce do I care, Sir, how a man like you loses his money, and whether it is at hazard or roulette?" screamed the Baronet, with a multiplicity of oaths, and at the top of his voice. "What I will not have, Sir, is that you should use my name, or couple it with yours. — Damn him, Strong, why don't you keep him in better order? I tell you he has gone and used my name again, Sir, — drawn a bill upon me, and lost the money on the table — I can't stand it — I won't stand it. Flesh and blood won't bear it — Do you know how much I have paid for you, Sir?"

"This was only a very little 'un, Sir Francis — only fifteen pound, Captain Strong, they wouldn't stand another: and it oughtn't to anger you, Governor. Why it's so trifling I did not even mention it to Strong, — did I now, Captain? I protest it had quite slipped my memory, and all on account of that confounded liquor I took."

"Liquor or no liquor, Sir, it is no business of mine. I don't care what you drink, or where you drink it — only it shan't be in my house. And I will not have you breaking into my house of a night, and a fellow like you intruding himself on my company: how dared you show yourself in Grosvenor Place last night, Sir, — and — and what do you suppose my friends must think of me when they see a man of your sort walking into my dining-room uninvited, and drunk, and calling for liquor as if you were the master of the house."

"They'll think you know some very queer sort of people. I dare say," Altamont said with impenetrable good-humour, "Look here, Baronet, I apologise; on my honour I do, and ain't an apology enough between two gentlemen? It was a

strong measure I own, walking into your cuddy, and calling for drink as if I was the Captain: but I had had too much before, you see, that 's why I wanted some more; nothing can be more simple — and it was because they wouldn't give me no more money upon your name at the Black and Red, that I thought I would come down and speak to you about it. To refuse me was nothing: but to refuse a bill drawn on you that have been such a friend to the shop, and are a baronet and a member of parliament, and a gentleman and no mistake — Damme, it 's ungrateful."

"By heavens if ever you do it again. If ever you dare to show yourself in my house; or give my name at a gambling-house or at any other house, by Jove — at any other house — or give any reference at all to me, or speak to me in the street, by Gad, or any where else until I speak to you — I disclaim you altogether — I won't give you another shilling."

"Governor, don't be provoking," Altamont said, surlily. "Don't talk to me about daring to do this thing or t'other, or when my dander is up it 's the very thing to urge me on. I oughtn't to have come last night, I know I oughtn't: but I told you I was drunk, and that ought to be sufficient between gentleman and gentleman."

"You a gentleman! dammy, Sir," said the Baronet, "how dares a fellow like you to call himself a gentleman?"

"I ain't a baronet, I know;" growled the other; "and I've forgotten how to be a gentleman almost now, but — but I was one once, and my father was one, and I'll not have this sort of talk from you, Sir F. Clavering, that 's flat. I want to go abroad again. Why don't you come down with the money, and let me go? Why the devil are you to be rolling in riches, and me to have none? Why should you have a house and a table covered with plate, and me be in a garret here in this beggarly Shepherd's Inn? We 're partners, ain't we?"

I've as good a right to be rich as you have, haven't I? Tell the story to Strong here, if you like; and ask him to be umpire between us. I don't mind letting my secret out to a man that won't split. Look here, Strong — perhaps you guess the story already — the fact is, me and the Governor" —

"D—, hold your tongue," shrieked out the Baronet in a fury. "You shall have the money as soon as I can get it. I ain't made of money. I'm so pressed and badgered, I don't know where to turn. I shall go mad; by Jove, I shall. I wish I was dead, for I'm the most miserable brute alive. I say, Mr. Altamont, don't mind me. When I'm out of health — and I'm devilish bilious this morning — hang me, I abuse everybody, and don't know what I say. Excuse me if I've offended you. I — I'll try and get that little business done. Strong shall try. Upon my word he shall. And I say, Strong, my boy, I want to speak to you. Come into the office for a minute."

Almost all Clavering's assaults ended in this ignominious way, and in a shameful retreat. Altamont sneered after the Baronet as he left the room, and entered into the office, to talk privately with his factotum.

"What is the matter now?" the latter asked of him. "It's the old story, I suppose."

"D— it, yes," the Baronet said. "I dropped two hundred in ready money at the Little Coventry last night, and gave a check for three hundred more. On her ladyship's bankers too, for to-morrow; and I must meet it, for there 'll be the deuce to pay else. The last time she paid my play-debts, I swore I would not touch a dice-box again, and she 'll keep her word, Strong, and dissolve partnership, if I go on. I wish I had three hundred a year, and was away. At a German watering-place you can do devilish well with three hundred a year. But my habits are so d— reckless: I wish I was in the

Serpentine. I wish I was dead, by Gad I wish I was. I wish I had never touched those confounded bones. I had such a run of luck last night, with five for the main, and seven to five all night, until those ruffians wanted to pay me with Altamont's bill upon me. The luck turned from that minute. Never held the box again for three mains, and came away cleared out, leaving that infernal check behind me. How shall I pay it? Blackland won't hold it over. Hulker and Bullock will write about it directly to her ladyship. By Jove, Ned, I 'm the most miserable brute in all England."

It was necessary for Ned to devise some plan to console the Baronet under this pressure of grief; and no doubt he found the means of procuring a loan for his patron, for he was closeted at Mr. Campion's offices that day for some time. Altamont had once more a guinea or two in his pocket, with a promise of a farther settlement; and the Baronet had no need to wish himself dead for the next two or three months at least. And Strong, putting together what he had learned from the Colonel and Sir Francis, began to form in his own mind a pretty accurate opinion as to the nature of the tie which bound the two men together.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A chapter of conversations.

EVERY day, after the entertainments at Grosvenor Place and Greenwich, of which we have seen Major Pendennis partake, the worthy gentleman's friendship and cordiality for the Clavering family seemed to increase. His calls were frequent; his attentions to the lady of the house unremitting. An old man about town, he had the good fortune to be received in many houses, at which a lady of Lady Clavering's distinction

ought also to be seen. Would her ladyship not like to be present at the grand entertainment at Gaunt House? There was to be a very pretty breakfast ball at Viscount Marrowfat's, at Fulham. Everybody was to be there (including august personages of the highest rank), and there was to be a Watteau quadrille, in which Miss Amory would surely look charming. To these and other amusements the obsequious old gentleman kindly offered to conduct Lady Clavering, and was also ready to make himself useful to the Baronet in any way agreeable to the latter.

In spite of his present station and fortune, the world persisted in looking rather coldly upon Clavering, and strange suspicious rumours followed him about. He was black-balled at two clubs in succession. In the House of Commons, he only conversed with a few of the most disreputable members of that famous body, having a happy knack of choosing bad society, and adapting himself naturally to it, as other people do to the company of their betters. To name all the senators with whom Clavering consorted, would be invidious. We may mention only a few. There was Captain Raff, the honourable member for Epsom, who retired after the last Goodwood races, having accepted, as Mr. Hotspur, the whip of the party, said, a mission to the Levant; there was Hustingson, the patriotic member for Islington, whose voice is never heard now denouncing corruption, since his appointment to the Governorship of Coventry Island; there was Bob Freeny, of the Booterstown Freenys, who is a dead shot, and of whom we therefore wish to speak with every respect; and of all these gentlemen, with whom in the course of his professional duty Mr. Hotspur had to confer, there was none for whom he had a more thorough contempt and dislike than for Sir Francis Clavering, the representative of an ancient race, who had sat for their own borough of Clavering time out of mind in the

House. "If that man is wanted for a division," Hotspur said, "ten to one he is to be found in a hell. He was educated in the Fleet, and he has not heard the end of Newgate yet, take my word for it. He 'll muddle away the Begum's fortune at thimble-rig, be caught picking pockets, and finish on board the hulks." And if the high-born Hotspur, with such an opinion of Clavering, could yet from professional reasons be civil to him, why should not Major Pendennis also have reasons of his own for being attentive to this unlucky gentleman?

"He has a very good cellar and a very good cook," the Major said; as long as he is silent he is not offensive, and he very seldom speaks. If he chooses to frequent gambling-tables, and lose his money to blacklegs, what matters to me? Don't look too curiously into any man's affairs, Pen my boy; every fellow has some cupboard in his house, begad, which he would not like you and me to peep into. Why should we try, when the rest of the house is open to us? And a devilish good house, too, as you and I know. And if the man of the family is not all one could wish, the women are excellent. The Begum is not over-refined, but as kind a woman as ever lived, and devilish clever too; and as for the little Blanche, you know my opinion about her, you rogue; you know my belief is that she is sweet on you, and would have you for the asking. But you are growing such a great man, that I suppose you won't be content under a Duke's daughter — Hey, Sir? I recommend you to ask one of them, and try."

Perhaps Pen was somewhat intoxicated by his success in the world; and it may also have entered into the young man's mind (his uncle's perpetual hints serving not a little to encourage the notion) that Miss Amory was tolerably well disposed to renew the little flirtation which had been carried on in the early days of both of them, by the banks of the rural Brawl. But he was little disposed to marriage, he said, at

that moment, and, adopting some of his uncle's worldly tone, spoke rather contemptuously of the institution, and in favour of a bachelor life.

"You are very happy, Sir," said he, "and you get on very well alone, and so do I. With a wife at my side, I should lose my place in society; and I don't, for my part, much fancy retiring into the country with a Mrs. Pendennis; or taking my wife into lodgings to be waited upon by the servant-of-all-work. The period of my little illusions is over. You cured me of my first love, who certainly was a fool, and would have had a fool for her husband, and a very sulky discontented husband too if she had taken me. We young fellows live fast, Sir; and I feel as old at five-and-twenty as many of the old fo — the old bachelors — whom I see in the bow-window at Bays's. Don't look offended, I only mean that I am *blasé* about love matters, and that I could no more fan myself into a flame for Miss Amory now, than I could adore Lady Mirabel over again. I wish I could; I rather like old Mirabel for his infatuation about her, and think his passion is the most respectable part of his life."

"Sir Charles Mirabel was always a theatrical man, Sir," the Major said, annoyed that his nephew should speak flippantly of any person of Sir Charles's rank and station. "He has been occupied with theatricals since his early days. He acted at Carlton House when he was Page to the Prince; — he has been mixed up with that sort of thing: he could afford to marry whom he chooses; and Lady Mirabel is a most respectable woman, received everywhere — everywhere, mind. The Duchess of Connaught receives her, Lady Rockminster receives her — it doesn't become young fellows to speak lightly of people in that station. There's not a more respectable woman in England than Lady Mirabel: — and the old fogies, as you call them at Bays's, are some of the first.

gentlemen in England, of whom you youngsters had best learn a little manners, and a little breeding, and a little modesty." And the Major began to think that Pen was growing exceedingly pert and conceited, and that the world made a great deal too much of him.

The Major's anger amused Pen. He studied his uncle's peculiarities with a constant relish, and was always in a good humour with his worldly old Mentor. "I am a youngster of fifteen years standing, Sir," he said, adroitly, "and if you think that *we* are disrespectful, you should see those of the present generation. A protégé of yours came to breakfast with me the other day. You told me to ask him, and I did it to please you. We had a day's sights together, and dined at the club, and went to the play. He said the wine at the Polyanthus was not so good as Ellis's wine at Richmond, smoked Warington's cavendish after breakfast, and when I gave him a sovereign as a farewell token, said he had plenty of them, but would take it to show he wasn't proud."

"Did he? — did you ask young Clavering?" cried the Major, appeased at once — "fine boy, rather wild, but a fine boy — parents like that sort of attention, and you can't do better than pay it to our worthy friends of Grosvenor Place. And so you took him to the play and tipped him? That was right, Sir, that was right:" with which Mentor quitted Telemachus, thinking that the young men were not so very bad, and that he should make something of that fellow yet.

As Master Clavering grew into years and stature, he became too strong for the authority of his fond parents and governess; and rather governed them than permitted himself to be led by their orders. With his papa he was silent and sulky, seldom making his appearance, how-

ever, in the neighbourhood of that gentleman; with his mamma he roared and fought when any contest between them arose as to the gratification of his appetite, or other wish of his heart; and in his disputes with his governess over his book, he kicked that quiet creature's shins so fiercely, that she was entirely overmastered and subdued by him. And he would have so treated his sister Blanche, too, and did on one or two occasions attempt to prevail over her; but she showed an immense resolution and spirit on her part, and boxed his ears so soundly, that he forebore from molesting Miss Amory, as he did the governess and his mamma, and his mamma's maid.

At length, when the family came to London, Sir Francis gave forth his opinion, that "the little beggar had best be sent to school." Accordingly the young son and heir of the house of Clavering was dispatched to the Rev. Otto Rose's establishment at Twickenham, where young noblemen and gentlemen were received preparatory to their introduction to the great English public schools.

It is not our intention to follow Master Clavering in his scholastic career; the paths to the Temple of Learning were made more easy to him than they were to some of us of earlier generations. He advanced towards that fane in a carriage-and-four, so to speak, and might halt and take refreshment almost whenever he pleased. He wore varnished boots from the earliest period of youth, and had cambric handkerchiefs and lemon-coloured kid gloves, of the smallest size ever manufactured by Privat. They dressed regularly at Mr. Rose's to come down to dinner; the young gentlemen had shawl dressing-gowns, fires in their bed-rooms, horse and carriage exercise occasionally, and oil for their hair. Corporal punishment was altogether dispensed with by the Principal, who thought that moral discipline was entirely sufficient to lead youth; and the boys were so rapidly advanced in many

branches of learning, that they acquired the art of drinking spirits and smoking cigars, even before they were old enough to enter a public school. Young Frank Clavering stole his father's Havannahs, and conveyed them to school, or smoked them in the stables, at a surprisingly early period of life, and at ten years old drank his Champagne almost as stoutly as any whiskered cornet of dragoons could do.

When this interesting youth came home for his vacations, Major Pendennis was as laboriously civil and gracious to him as he was to the rest of the family; although the boy had rather a contempt for old Wigsby, as the Major was denominated, — mimicked him behind his back, as the polite Major bowed and smirked with Lady Clavering or Miss Amory; and drew rude caricatures, such as are designed by ingenious youths, in which the Major's wig, his nose, his tie, &c., were represented with artless exaggeration. Untiring in his efforts to be agreeable, the Major wished that Pen, too, should take particular notice of this child; incited Arthur to invite him to his chambers, to give him a dinner at the club, to take him to Madame Tussaud's, the Tower, the play, and so forth, and to tip him, as the phrase is, at the end of the day's pleasures. Arthur, who was good-natured and fond of children, went through all these ceremonies one day; had the boy to breakfast at the Temple, where he made the most contemptuous remarks regarding the furniture, the crockery, and the tattered state of Warrington's dressing-gown; and smoked a short pipe, and recounted the history of a fight between Tuffy and Long Biggings, at Rose's, greatly to the edification of the two gentlemen his hosts.

As the Major rightly predicted, Lady Clavering was very grateful for Arthur's attention to the boy; more grateful than the lad himself, who took attentions as a matter of course, and very likely had more sovereigns in his pocket than poor Pen,

who generously gave him one of his own slender stock of those coins.

The Major, with the sharp eyes with which Nature endowed him, and with the glasses of age and experience, watched this boy, and surveyed his position in the family without seeming to be rudely curious about their affairs. But, as a country neighbour, one who had many family obligations to the Claverings, an old man of the world, he took occasion to find out what Lady Clavering's means were, how her capital was disposed, and what the boy was to inherit. And setting himself to work, — for what purposes will appear, no doubt, ultimately, — he soon had got a pretty accurate knowledge of Lady Clavering's affairs and fortune, and of the prospects of her daughter and son. The daughter was to have but a slender provision; the bulk of the property was, as before has been said, to go to the son, — his father did not care for him or anybody else, — his mother was dotingly fond of him as the child of her latter days, — his sister disliked him. Such may be stated, in round numbers, to be the result of the information which Major Pendennis got. "Ah! my dear Madam," he would say, patting the head of the boy, "this boy may wear a baron's coronet on his head on some future coronation, if matters are but managed rightly, and if Sir Francis Clavering would but play his cards well."

At this the widow Amory heaved a deep sigh. "He plays only too much of his cards, Major, I'm afraid," she said. The Major owned that he knew as much; did not disguise that he had heard of Sir Francis Clavering's unfortunate propensity to play; pitied Lady Clavering sincerely; but spoke with such genuine sentiment and sense, that her ladyship, glad to find a person of experience to whom she could confide her grief and her condition, talked about them pretty unreservedly to Major Pendennis, and was eager to have his advice and consolation.

Major Pendennis became the Begum's confidante and house-friend, and as a mother, a wife, and a capitalist, she consulted him.

He gave her to understand (showing at the same time a great deal of respectful sympathy) that he was acquainted with some of the circumstances of her first unfortunate marriage, and with even the person of her late husband, whom he remembered in Calcutta — when she was living in seclusion with her father. The poor lady, with tears of shame more than of grief in her eyes, told her version of her story. Going back a child to India after two years at a European school, she had met Amory, and foolishly married him. "O, you don't know how miserable that man made me," she said, "or what a life I passed betwixt him and my father. Before I saw him I had never seen a man except my father's clerks and native servants. You know we didn't go into society in India on account of—" ("I know," said Major Pendennis, with a bow). "I was a wild romantic child, my head was full of novels which I'd read at school — I listened to his wild stories and adventures, for he was a daring fellow, and I thought he talked beautifully of those calm nights on the passage out, when he used to . . . Well, I married him, and I was wretched from that day — wretched with my father, whose character you know, Major Pendennis, and I won't speak of: but he wasn't a good man, Sir, — neither to my poor mother, nor to me, except that he left me his money, — nor to no one else that I ever heard of: and he didn't do many kind actions in his lifetime, I'm afraid. And as for Amory he was almost worse; he was a spendthrift when my father was close: he drank dreadfully, and was furious when in that way. He wasn't in any way a good or a faithful husband to me, Major Pendennis; and if he'd died in the gaol before this trial, instead of afterwards, he would have saved me a deal of shame and of unhappiness

since, Sir." Lady Clavering added: "For perhaps I should not have married at all if I had not been so anxious to change his horrid name, and I have not been happy in my second husband, as I suppose you know, Sir. Ah, Major Pendennis, I've got money to be sure, and I'm a lady, and people fancy I'm very happy, but I ain't. We all have our cares, and griefs, and troubles: and many 's the day that I sit down to one of my grand dinners with an aching heart, and many a night do I lay awake on my fine bed, a great deal more unhappy than the maid that makes it. For I'm not a happy woman, Major, for all the world says; and envies the Begum her diamonds, and carriages, and the great company that comes to my house. I'm not happy in my husband; I'm not happy in my daughter. She ain't a good girl like that dear Laura Bell at Fair Oaks. She's cost we many a tear though you don't see 'em; and she sneers at her mother because I haven't had learning and that. How should I? I was brought up amongst natives till I was twelve, and went back to India when I was fourteen. Ah, Major, I should have been a good woman if I had had a good husband. And now I must go upstairs and wipe my eyes, for they're red with cryin. And Lady Rockminster's a comin, and we're goin to ave a drive in the Park." And when Lady Rockminster made her appearance, there was not a trace of tears or vexation on Lady Clavering's face, but she was full of spirits, and bounced out with her blunders and talk, and murdered the king's English with the utmost liveliness and good humour.

"Begad, she is not such a bad woman!" the Major thought within himself. "She is not refined, certainly, and calls 'Apollo' 'Apoller;' but she has some heart, and I like that sort of thing, and a devilish deal of money, too. Three stars in India Stock to her name, begad! which that young cub is to have — is he?" And he thought how he should like

to see a little of the money transferred to Miss Blanche, and, better still, one of those stars shining in the name of Mr. Arthur Pendennis.

Still bent upon pursuing his schemes, whatsoever they might be, the old negotiator took the privilege of his intimacy and age, to talk in a kindly and fatherly manner to Miss Blanche, when he found occasion to see her alone. He came in so frequently at luncheon-time, and became so familiar with the ladies, that they did not even hesitate to quarrel before him; and Lady Clavering, whose tongue was loud, and temper brusque, had many a battle with the Sylphide in the family friend's presence. Blanche's wit seldom failed to have the mastery in these encounters, and the keen barbs of her arrows drove her adversary discomfited away. "I am an old fellow," the Major said; "I have nothing to do in life. I have my eyes open. I keep good counsel. I am the friend of both of you; and if you choose to quarrel before my, why I shan't tell any one. But you are two good people, and I intend to make it up between you. I have between lots of people — husbands and wives, fathers and sons, daughters and mammas, before this. I like it; I've nothing else to do."

One day, then, the old diplomatist entered Lady Clavering's drawing-room, just as the latter quitted it, evidently in a high state of indignation, and ran past him up the stairs to her own apartments. "She couldn't speak to him now," she said; "she was a great deal too angry with that — that — that little, wicked" — anger choked the rest of the words, or prevented their utterance until Lady Clavering had passed out of hearing.

"My dear, good Miss Amory," the Major said, entering the drawing-room, "I see what is happening. You and mamma have been disagreeing. Mothers and daughters disagree in the best families. It was but last week that I healed up a

quarrel between Lady Clapperton and her daughter Lady Claudia. Lady Lear and her eldest daughter have not spoken for fourteen years. Kinder and more worthy people than these I never knew in the whole course of my life; for everybody but each other admirable. But they can't live together: they oughtn't to live together: and I wish, my dear creature, with all my soul, that I could see you with an establishment of your own — for there is no woman in London who could conduct one better — with your own establishment, making your own home happy."

"I am not very happy in this one," said the Sylphide; "and the stupidity of mamma is enough to provoke a saint."

"Precisely so; you are not suited to one another. Your mother committed one fault in early life — or was it Nature, my dear, in your case? — she ought not to have educated you. You ought not to have been bred up to become the refined and intellectual being you are, surrounded, as I own you are, by those who have not your genius or your refinement. Your place would be to lead in the most brilliant circles, not to follow, and take a second place in any society. I have watched you, Miss Amory: you are ambitious; and your proper sphere is command. You ought to shine; and you never can in this house, I know it. I hope I shall see you in another and a happier one, some day, and the mistress of it."

The Sylphide shrugged her lily shoulders with a look of scorn. "Where is the Prince, and where is the palace, Major Pendennis?" she said. "I am ready. But there is no romance in the world now, no real affection."

"No, indeed," said the Major, with the most sentimental and simple air which he could muster.

"Not that I know anything about it," said Blanche, casting her eyes down, "except what I have read in novels."

"Of course not," Major Pendennis cried; "how should you, my dear young lady? and novels ain't true, as you remark admirably, and there is no romance left in the world. Begad, I wish I was a young fellow like my nephew."

"And what," continued Miss Amory, musing, "what are the men whom we see about at the balls every night — dancing guardsmen, penniless treasury clerks — boobies! If I had my brother's fortune, I might have such an establishment as you promise me — but with my name, and with my little means, what am I to look to? A country parson, or a barrister in a street near Russell Square, or a captain in a dragoon-regiment, who will take lodgings for me, and come home from the mess tipsy and smelling of smoke like Sir Francis Clavering. That is how we girls are destined to end life. O Major Pendennis, I am sick of London, and of balls, and of young dandies with their chin-tips, and of the insolent great ladies who know us one day and cut us the next — and of the world altogether. I should like to leave it and to go into a convent, that I should. I shall never find any body to understand me. And I live here as much alone in my family and in the world, as if I were in a cell locked up for ever. I wish there were Sisters of Charity here, and that I could be one and catch the plague, and die of it — I wish to quit the world. I am not very old: but I am tired, I have suffered so much — I've been so disillusionated — I'm weary, I'm weary — O that the Angel of Death would come and beckon me away!"

This speech may be interpreted as follows. A few nights since a great lady, Lady Flamingo, had cut Miss Amory and Lady Clavering. She was quite mad because she could not get an invitation to Lady Drum's ball: it was the end of the season and nobody had proposed to her: she had made no sensation at all, she who was so much cleverer than any girl of the year, and of the young ladies forming her special

circle. Dora who had but five thousand pounds, Flora who had nothing, and Leonora who had red hair, were going to be married, and nobody had come for Blanche Amory!

"You judge wisely about the world, and about your position, my dear Miss Blanche," the Major said. "The Prince don't marry now-a-days, as you say: unless the Princess has a doosid deal of money in the funds, or is a lady of his own rank. — The young folks of the great families marry into the great families: if they haven't fortune they have each other's shoulders, to push on in the world, which is pretty nearly as good. — A girl with your fortune can scarcely hope for a great match: but a girl with your genius and your admirable tact and fine manners, with a clever husband by her side, may make *any* place for herself in the world. — We are grown doosid republican. Talent ranks with birth and wealth now, begad: and a clever man with a clever wife, may take any place they please."

Miss Amory did not of course in the least understand what Major Pendennis meant. — Perhaps she thought over circumstances in her mind and asked herself, could he be a negotiator for a former suitor of hers, and could he mean Pen? No, it was impossible — He had been civil, but nothing more. — So she said, laughing, "Who is the clever man, and when will you bring him to me, Major Pendennis? I am dying to see him."

At this moment a servant threw open the door, and announced Mr. Henry Foker: at which name, and at the appearance of our friend, both the lady and the gentleman burst out laughing.

"That is not the man," Major Pendennis said. "He is engaged to his cousin, Lord Gravesend's daughter. — Good-bye, my dear Miss Amory."

Was Pen growing worldly, and should a man not get the experience of the world and lay it to his account? "He felt, for his part," as he said, "that he was growing very old very soon. How this town forms and changes us," he said once to Warrington. Each had come in from his night's amusement; and Pen was smoking his pipe, and recounting, as his habit was, to his friend the observations and adventures of the evening just past. "How I am changed," he said, "from the simpleton boy at Fair Oaks, who was fit to break his heart about his first love! Lady Mirabel had a reception to-night, and was as grave and collected as if she had been born a Duchess, and had never seen a trap-door in her life. She gave me the honour of a conversation, and patronised me about Walter Lorraine, quite kindly."

"What condescension," broke in Warrington.

"Wasn't it?" Pen said, simply — at which the other burst out laughing according to his wont. "Is it possible," he said, "that any body should think of patronising the eminent author of *Walter Lorraine*?"

"You laugh at both of us," Pen said, blushing a little — "I was coming to that myself. She told me that she had not read the book (as indeed I believe she never read a book in her life), but that Lady Rockminster had, and that the Duchess of Connaught pronounced it to be very clever. In that case, I said I should die happy, for that to please those two ladies was in fact the great aim of my existence, and having their approbation, of course I need look for no other. Lady Mirabel looked at me solemnly out of her fine eyes, and said, 'O indeed,' as if she understood me, and then she asked me whether I went to the Duchess's Thursdays, and when I said No, hoped she should see me there, and that I must try and get there, everybody went there — everybody who was in society: and then we talked of the new ambassador from

Timbuctoo, and how he was better than the old one; and how Lady Mary Billington was going to marry a clergyman quite below her in rank; and how Lord and Lady Ringdove had fallen out three months after their marriage about Tom Pouter of the Blues, Lady Ringdove's cousin — and so forth. From the gravity of that woman you would have fancied she had been born in a palace, and lived all the seasons of her life in Belgrave Square."

"And you, I suppose you took your part in the conversation pretty well, as the descendant of the Earl your father, and the heir of Fair Oaks Castle?" Warrington said. "Yes, I remember reading of the festivities which occurred when you came of age. The Countess gave a brilliant tea soirée to the neighbouring nobility; and the tenantry were regaled in the kitchen with a leg of mutton and a quart of ale. The remains of the banquet were distributed amongst the poor of the village, and the entrance to the park was illuminated until old John put the candle out on retiring to rest at his usual hour."

"My mother is not a countess," said Pen, "though she has very good blood in her veins too — but commoner as she is, I have never met a peeress who was more than her peer, Mr. George; and if you will come to Fair Oaks Castle you shall judge for yourself of her and of my cousin too. They are not so witty as the London women, but they certainly are as well bred. The thoughts of women in the country are turned to other objects than those which occupy your London ladies. In the country a woman has her household and her poor, her long calm days and long calm evenings."

"Devilish long," Warrington said, "and a great deal too calm; I've tried 'em."

"The monotony of that existence must be to a certain degree melancholy — like the tune of a long ballad; and its

harmony grave and gentle, sad and tender: it would be unendurable else. The loneliness of women in the country makes them of necessity soft and sentimental. Leading a life of calm duty, constant routine, mystic reverie, — a sort of nuns at large — too much gaiety or laughter would jar upon their almost sacred quiet, and would be as out of place there as in a church."

"Where you go to sleep over the sermon," Warrington said.

"You are a professed misogynist, and hate the sex because, I suspect, you know very little about them," Mr. Pen continued, with an air of considerable self-complacency. "If you dislike the women in the country for being too slow, surely the London woman ought to be fast enough for you. The pace of London life is enormous: how do people last at it, I wonder, — male and female? Take a woman of the world: follow her course through the season; one asks how she can survive it? or if she tumbles into a sleep at the end of August, and lies torpid until the spring? She goes into the world every night, and sits watching her marriageable daughters dancing till long after dawn. She has a nursery of little ones, very likely, at home, to whom she administers example and affection; having an eye likewise to bread-and-milk, catechism, music and French, and roast leg of mutton at one o'clock; she has to call upon ladies of her own station, either domestically or in her public character, in which she sits upon Charity Committees, or Ball Committees, or Emigration Committees, or Queen's College Committees, and discharges I don't know what more duties of British stateswomanship. She very likely keeps a poor-visiting list; has combinations with the clergyman about soup or flannel, or proper religious teaching for the parish; and (if she lives in certain districts) probably attends early church. She has the newspapers to read, and, at least,

must know what her husband's party is about, so as to be able to talk to her neighbour at dinner; and it is a fact that she reads every new book that comes out; for she can talk, and very smartly and well, about them all, and you see them all upon her drawing-room table. She has the cares of her household besides: — to make both ends meet; to make the girls' milliner's bills appear not too dreadful to the father and paymaster of the family; to snip off, in secret, a little extra article of expenditure here and there, and convey it, in the shape of a bank-note, to the boys at college or at sea; to check the encroachments of tradesmen and housekeepers' financial fallacies; to keep upper and lower servants from jangling with one another, and the household in order. Add to this, that she has a secret taste for some art or science, models in clay, makes experiments in chemistry, or plays in private on the violoncello, — and I say, without exaggeration, many London ladies are doing this, — and you have a character before you such as our ancestors never heard of, and such as belongs entirely to our era and period of civilisation. Ye gods! how rapidly we live and grow! In nine months, Mr. Paxton grows you a pine-apple as large as a portmanteau, whereas a little one, no bigger than a Dutch cheese, took three years to attain his majority in old times; and as the race of pine-apples so is the race of man. Hoiaper — what's the Greek for a pine-apple, Warrington?"

"Stop, for mercy's sake, stop with the English and before you come to the Greek," Warrington cried out, laughing. "I never heard you make such a long speech, or was aware that you had penetrated so deeply into the female mysteries. Who taught you all this, and into whose boudoirs and nurseries have you been peeping, whilst I was smoking my pipe, and reading my book, lying on my straw bed?"

"You are on the bank, old boy, content to watch the waves

tossing in the winds, and the struggles of others at sea," Pen said. "I am in the stream now, and by Jove I like it. How rapidly we go down it, hey? — strong and feeble, old and young — the metal pitchers and the earthen pitchers — the pretty little china boat swims gaily till the big bruised brazen one bumps him and sends him down — eh, *vogue la galère!* — you see a man sink in the race, and say good-bye to him — look, he has only dived under the other fellow's legs, and comes up shaking his pole, and striking out ever so far ahead. Eh, *vogue la galère*, I say. It's good sport, Warrington — not winning merely, but playing."

"Well, go in and win, young 'un. I'll sit and mark the game," Warrington said, surveying the ardent young fellow with an almost fatherly pleasure. "A generous fellow plays for the play, a sordid one for the stake; an old foggy sits by and smokes the pipe of tranquillity, while Jack and Tom are pummelling each other in the ring."

"Why don't you come in, George, and have a turn with the gloves? You are big enough and strong enough," Pen said. "Dear old boy, you are worth ten of me."

"You are not quite as tall as Goliath, certainly," the other answered, with a laugh that was rough and yet tender. "And as for me, I am disabled. I had a fatal hit in early life. I will tell you about it some day. You may, too, meet with your master. Don't be too eager, or too confident, or too worldly, my boy."

Was Pendennis becoming worldly, or only seeing the world, or both? and is a man very wrong for being after all only a man? Which is the most reasonable, and does his duty best: he who stands aloof from the struggle of life, calmly contemplating it, or he who descends to the ground, and takes his part in the contest? "That philosopher," Pen said, "had held a great place amongst the leaders of the world, and

enjoyed to the full what it had to give of rank and riches, renown and pleasure, who came, weary-hearted, out of it, and said that all was vanity and vexation of spirit. Many a teacher of those whom we reverence, and who steps out of his carriage up to his carved cathedral place, shakes his lawn ruffles over the velvet cushion, and cries out, that the whole struggle is an accursed one, and the works of the world are evil. Many a conscience-stricken mystic flies from it altogether, and shuts himself out from it within convent walls (real or spiritual), whence he can only look up to the sky, and contemplate the heaven out of which there is no rest, and no good.

"But the earth, where our feet are, is the work of the same Power as the immeasurable blue yonder, in which the future lies into which we would peer. Who ordered toil as the condition of life, ordered weariness, ordered sickness, ordered poverty, failure, success — to this man a foremost place, to the other a nameless struggle with the crowd — to that a shameful fall, or paralysed limb, or sudden accident — to each some work upon the ground he stands on, until he is laid beneath it." While they were talking, the dawn came shining through the windows of the room, and Pen threw them open to receive the fresh morning air. "Look, George," said he; "look and see the sun rise: he sees the labourer on his way a-field; the work-girl plying her poor needle; the lawyer at his desk, perhaps; the beauty smiling asleep upon her pillow of down; or the jaded reveller reeling to bed; or the fevered patient tossing on it; or the doctor watching by it, over the throes of the mother for the child that is to be born into the world; — to be born and to take his part in the suffering and struggling, the tears and laughter, the crime, remorse, love, folly, sorrow, rest."

END OF VOL. II.

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